



James Bindlow



James Bindlow

The remarkable Mary, Ballard, in
her Memoirs of celebrated Ladies, has
given a particular account of Mrs. Astell
her writings, takes no Notice of this
all but it can hardly be doubted that
it was by her, as from the underwriting
it seems to have been given by

The Lady Blount
Dec. 17 1724

Given me by Mrs Astell & Author of y^e 8 Ser
Books, Pamphlets & Papers, w^{ch} I have also.

N.B. 4568

See a full Account of Mrs Astell, in
the Biographia Britannica Volume
page 3713. under the Article of Bishop
Conalbridge, in the Notes.

The first Edition of this Book was
Published in 1709. with the following
Title Page.

Bartlemey Fair:

or an Enquiry after Wit, in which
the Prospect is had to a Letter con-
cerning Enthusiasme to my Lord

*. By Mr. Wotton.

Much Malice mingled with
a little Wit. Hind & Panther
transvers'd.

Answer a Fool according to his
Folly lest he be wise in his
own conceit.

London.

Printed for R. Wilkin at
the King's head in St. Pauls
Church Yard. 1709.

401.43.

Gal 10 666

A N
E N Q U I R Y
A F T E R
W I T:

Wherein the
Trifling Arguing and Impious Raillery

Of the Late

Earl of SHAFTSBURY,

In his LETTER concerning *Enthusiasm*,
and other Profane Writers,

Are fully Answer'd, and justly Exposed.

*Answer a Fool according to his Folly, lest he be wise
in his own Conceit.*

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN BATEMAN, at the *Hat and Star* in
St. Paul's Church-Yard. M DCC XXII.

ENQUIRY

WIT:

Barth of SHASTSURY

LONDON:



ADVERTISEMENT.



HIS Treatise though it appear'd at first under a borrow'd Name, happen'd to be ascrib'd to one who sees nothing in it to be asham'd of. It drew upon her indeed the Resentments of that sort of Men of Wit who are here expos'd, and was the true Cause, of a Fable which the worthy Tatler was pleas'd to invent and publish a little after the Enquiry appear'd; though he thought fit to give another Reason when he was charg'd with doing what was so contrary to his Professions in many of his Tatlers, where he wou'd seem to pay Respect to Religion and Vertue.

However, this Gentleman and his Accomplices, have not only her Pardon, but her Thanks, so far as she is concern'd in that Invention. She binds it to her as her Glory and Crown, in that it intitles her to the Blessedness and Reward, promis'd to all who are revil'd and evil spoken of falsely for GOD's Sake. But tho' the Enquirer had offended the Tatler, and his great Friends, on whom he so liberally bestows his Panegyrics, by turning their Ridicule very justly upon themselves; what had any of her Acquaintance done to provoke him? Who does he point at? For she knows of none who ever attempted to erect a Nunnery, or declar'd, That Virginity was to be their State of Life. It cannot be three or four Noble Orphans

ADVERTISEMENT.

who chose to live (in Town as well as Country) with a Gentleman and his Wife, their Relations, who must be two of the Nuns to come near the *Tatler's* Number; for this was long before the Enquirer had the Honour of their Acquaintance. Nor is it agreeable to the many Declarations of our Censor; nor to what he wou'd have us believe was his general Purpose, viz. to recommend Truth, Innocence, Honour, and Vertue, to make free with the Character of Virgins, not less distinguish'd by these than by their Quality. 'Fly-blow,' says my Author, (*Tatler* 38.) who is receiv'd in all the Families in Town through the Degeneracy and Iniquity of their Manners, is to be treated like a Knave though he be one of the weakest of Fools: And for this Reason, because impotent Malice is to be treated with all our Force to suppress it.' I think not: It is enough to despise it.

The *Tatler* tells a Tale very agreeably, when he pleases, but he has scatter'd none of his Attic Salt on this. One cannot help pitying him to see how he writes against the Grain, and labours under the Task his noble Benefactors impos'd. The harmless Satyr does not bite; and tho' it shew'd its Teeth against the Proposal to the Ladies, our honest Compiler has made an honourable Amends to the Author, (I know not what he has to the Bookseller) by transcribing above an hundred Pages into his Ladies Library, * verbatim; except in a few Places, which if the Reader takes the Trouble to compare, perhaps he will not find improv'd. He has also made Satisfaction to Religion, in several Papers, particularly in *Tatler* 111. where he treats his Friends with proper, but coarser Language, than the Enquirer thought fit to use.

If any body desires to know why our Enquiry takes particular Notice of the *Tatler's* grand Patron, so well known by the Name of Mouse? The Answer is, that the

* Compare his Chapter of Ignorance, with *Proposal*, 2d Part, from p. 68, to p. 194.

ADVERTISEMENT.

the Lord among whose Works the Letter now appears, had not at that Time own'd it: But the other recommended it with high Encomiums, and by approving and encouraging, made himself a Partner in the Crime. Nor was he unsuspected of being the Author when it was put into the Enquirer's Hands, by some Persons of Quality and Merit, who desir'd it might be answer'd. But surely in a Christian Country, professing so much Zeal for Reformation, there needs no Apology for chastising the Insolence of Profane Persons, however distinguish'd. Some, as the wise King directs, are to be answer'd according to their Folly, lest they be wise in their own Conceit. They who read the Enquiry will, I hope, discern that the Laugh is not, or at least ought not to be, on the Libertine's Side, who are not less ridiculous than they are impious. When it was wrote, that Sex which us'd to be honour'd with the Character of Devotion and Modesty, had not broke through this natural Barrier, to rush into the bold Licentiousness of the other. Their Progress these last Seven Years, has exceeded all we have formerly seen or heard of English Ladies. It is necessary therefore, that some of the Sex shou'd enter their Protest against this horrible Indecency and Novelty, as well as Profaneness. Such Women as are so humble and discreet as to follow the Dictates of the Governing Sex, may please to read what follows, as Mr. Wotton's, or Mr. Any-body's, who has so much Courage as not to be asham'd of the Profession of Religion, and so much Honesty, as not to prefer the Name of Protestant, before the Belief and Practice of Christianity.

They who tell us, that Popery is worse than Atheism, cannot think as they say, unless they think it better to live without GOD in the World, than without a good Preferment: Or, that it is more eligible to die like the Beasts that perish, than to obtain a Crown of Martyrdom, which is the utmost a Christian can fear from Popery, where it is most triumphant, and a hundred to one on the Popish Side, as GOD be thanked, are
in

ADVERTISEMENT.

in this Nation on ours. 'Tis foolish or knavisb to consider the Mind of an Atheist (in which number I include all who deny Providence, a Future State, and Reveal'd Religion) as a blank Paper, in which there is nothing to be obliterated; far from this, it is smear'd and blotted with Vice, and all over ting'd with Diabolical Malice against GOD Himself. Of which there is but too flagrant, and sad Proof, in the many Impious Books that are publish'd with Impunity, or the Authors skreen'd and forgiven the too gentle Punishment that the Laws inflict. Among other Instances, the Letter concerning Enthusiasm (the civil Name they bestow on Christianity) is lately reviv'd, and recommended to young Gentlemen as an Incomparable Treatise, and a perfect Exemplar of the gay Style without Levity. Tho' the Character given by the Author's Friend of another Performance, suits it better;

Much Malice mingled with a little Wit.

And the Poyson being thus a-new prepar'd and spread abroad, is it not fit to renew the Antidote?

Let us in GOD's Name, and with His Truths, heartily oppose the Errors of the Roman Church, but let not Christianity be banish'd from our Land, out of a pretended Fear of Popery. Let us not, because the Papists superstitiously worship the Cross, deny our Crucify'd GOD and Saviour, nor refuse to take up our Cross and follow Him. The Inventions of Men, that Superstructure of Hay and Stubble they have rais'd upon a good Foundation, are surely more easily remov'd, than that Rock of Pride which hardens the Hearts of the Enemies of our common Christianity, and that Rubbish of Sensuality and Vice upon which no Christian Edifice can possibly be erected. We shew as little Charity as we ascribe to the Papists, if we exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven, such of them as are invincibly ignorant of their Superstitious and Errors. But who has found a Path thither for the Deist, and Men of No-Religion, tho' ever so zealous

ADVERTISEMENT.

lous against Popery, who, not content to reject the Modern Creed of the Assembly at Trent, strive to banish the Three Antient and truly Catholic Ones? And under the Pretence of being good Protestants, by which no more is meant than declaring against Popery, raise their Batteries, and carry on their Saps against Christianity in general: Men who live and die in the open Contempt of that Name through which alone we can be sav'd? Sincerity, stretch'd to the utmost Latitude, cannot comprehend these in the Kingdom of Christ, either here or hereafter, otherwise than as His declar'd Enemies, who, if they cou'd help it, wou'd not have Him to reign over them. For Charity itself, though it hopeth all Things, and believeth all Things, can neither hope, nor believe without contradicting the Truths of the Gospel, that they who in this present Life throw off all Respect to the Divine Majesty, who say in Words, as well as in the Tenor of their Lives, Depart from us, can enjoy Him in the next. How then is Atheism better than Popery? Both are bad; but there is not any manner of Necessity to run into the one to avoid the other.

Our modern Politicians who have no Dependance upon GOD and His Providence, act like themselves, when they lay their Schemes deep and make them black as Hell, and carry them on by wicked Artifices. But humane Policies are not proper Methods to defend the Church of Christ, or to maintain the Truths and Holiness of the Christian Profession. A People may preserve their Churches, and yet lose their Religion; may say, Lord, Lord, have we not disputed? Have we not fought? Have we not cast out, — and done many Wonderful Works — for OUR RELIGION? To whom the Prince of Purity and Peace will answer, I know you not; depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity.

It is a Degree of Atheism to distrust Divine Providence when we keep in the Way of our Duty, however dark and cloudy the Horizon may appear; and a much greater to think GOD stands in need of the sinful Man. The Great Lord and Ruler of all Things, can, whenever He pleases, take the Wise in their own Craftiness, and blast in

ADVERTISEMENT.

a Moment the best establish'd and most towering Fabrics of many Tears Labour and Art. He has promis'd that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against True Religion; but He has also threatened particular Churches to remove their Candlesticks, unless they repent and do their first Work. Which Threatnings have been severely and justly executed; and for nothing sooner than for Hypocrisy and Atheism. These go hand in hand; Men cou'd not be Hypocrites, were they not secretly Atheists. The Mask drops off, when Religion is no longer subservient to their Avarice and Ambition; and the BIGOT, by which I understand, one zealous for the Name and Externals of Religion, without the Life and Power, who wou'd do any thing rather than deny himself, and take up his Master's Cross; appears, what he all along really was, an Atheist. Such were the Pharisees and Sanhedrin, who Crucify'd the Messiah to preserve their Religion, that is, to gratify their Avarice and Ambition, the Idols of their Hearts. And such are all those who speak, or act wickedly for GOD, and profess to maintain his Truth by unjust and wicked Actions. Such Ways as these have more than once brought flourishing Nations to the Brink of Ruin. For when Men's Principles are lost, and their Vertue corrupted, Liberty and Property become an easy Prey.

Lately Printed for JOHN BATEMAN, at the Hat and Star in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

Liberty and Tyranny Exemplified in the true Characters of Two Northern Princes. 2d Edit.

Remarks upon a Restoration-Sermon, in a Letter, &c. 2d Edit.

POPPLICOLA: A Supplement to CATO's Letter concerning Popularity.

To

To the most
Illustrious Society
 OF THE
KIT-CATS.

MY LORDS, &c.



THE Reputation of being the a-
 vow'd Patrons of Wit and good
 Humour, and the properest Sub-
 jects of it, which you have so
 justly acquir'd, emboldens me to presume that
 the least Attempt that way, won't fail of your
 gracious Acceptance, and generous Encou-
 ragement. Confusion wou'd seize me in Ad-
 dressing to such accomplish'd Patrons, but that
 Modesty is the least of your Vertues, it scarce
 attends you to the Door of your Academy.
 Powerful Wit, cou'd I pretend any Interest in
 it, wou'd be a much better Master of the Ce-

The DEDICATION.

remonies than all the Vertues of the Greeks and Romans, tho' attended with the joint Eloquence of Tully and Demosthenes. For Wit is then most Godlike when it creates its Object, and never sparkles with so great a Lustre as in a Panegyrick upon Vice and Folly. To say no more than every body knows, is much the same with saying nothing; since 'tis little to the purpose, of Wit at least: But he must needs have a fund of Beauty in his own Mind, who where no body else can discern a Charm, finds enough to Captivate.

PARDON, noble Patrons, my too forward Zeal, who without Impulse or Enthusiasm, or any other Qualification besides a due Sense of your Merits, audaciously attempt to shew them to the World, as if it were not sufficiently appriz'd of them already! None but those paltry Fellows the Church-Wardens can be ignorant of your Fame; but having taken an Oath, they must remain as ignorant as they can in order to keep it.

AND oh! that the imagin'd Presence of so many great Men to whom I address myself, every one of 'em of a more than ordinary

THE DEDICATION.

5

inary Genius, might inspire and raise my Thoughts to make a suitable Encomium, which late Posterity might read, and wonder! Oppress'd with so much Merit where shall I begin! Your Intellectual and Moral Endowments, your Civil and Military Vertues, your Publick and Private Accomplishments, being equally Valuable and Extraordinary! But your Wit and good Humour have determin'd me; That Love to the Public, that Study of universal Good, and to promote the Interest of the whole World, as far as is in your Power; your indefatigable Industry to communicate to Mankind that perfect Freedom you enjoy, this is surely the height of Goodness!

IN time of Yore, the Men of Quality had no Notion of Greatness, without Stateliness and Moroseness accompanying it, they won'd be distinguished from Plebeians both by their Vices and their Vertues. You perfectly understand, 'tis true, how to maintain your Grandeur and noble Haughtiness upon just Occasions. As when a cluster of saucy Tradesmen, thinking they have an English Right to ask their own, intrude into your

Anti-Chambers, if Cunning, Force, or Fees, can procure them that Privilege, and not content to pass for humble Suitors, will needs shew themselves to be troublesome Duns: When an Ill-bred Fellow endeavours to protect a Wife, or Daughter, or other vertuous Woman, from your very Civil Addresses, your noble Courage never fails of being rous'd upon such great Provocations, and if the wile Offender don't sneak out of your way, unarm'd as he is, you know how to whip him thro' the Lungs most valiantly! But excepting these and a few other Cases, such is your Candor and Generosity, you are so truly Good, that the very lowest of the Mob may tread in your renowned Steps, may do you secret and important Services; Drink and Swear their Quota with the best of you, dare treat you freely, and are sure you will not be displeas'd with this Liberty.

THE income of the Mob indeed will not allow them to keep pace in your elegant way of Living; as yet they are forc'd to stand at awful Distance. But to your everlasting Praise, you cease not to endeavour, by the
Assi-

The DEDICATION.

7

Assistance of your darling Luxury, that great Leveller and Transferrer of Property, to make the Tradesman equal to the Lord. And were it not for the Narrow-soul'd Care of some of your Ancestors, who have unluckily put a stop to your Generosity, you might have an occasion of imitating that fine Action whereby the Noble Apicius put an end to his Glorious Life! However, in that which costs them nought, in Oaths, Blasphemies and Execrations, the vilest Mechanic and Beggar, encourag'd by your Bravery, scorns to come behind the Greatest Peer. And such has been your Zeal and Public-Spiritedness, that almost every Street and Lane is become an Academy where this Rhetoric may be learnt!

ONE has not, I confess, heard of your Fame from Hochsted, Ramellies, &c. But every body knows that the World is Envious and Ungrateful, 'tis to your sedate Wisdom, your healing, vigorous Councils, wise Debates, and prudent Management, that the English Name has retriev'd, or even excell'd, its antient Glory! You who are our Household Gods cou'd not indeed be permit-

A 4

ted

ted to leave the Island, and expose your precious Lives, your All, to seek for Laurels on a foreign Shore: Wit so consummate as yours, knows how to gather them at home, at less Expence, and to reap the Fruits of Victory far from the Dangers of War. For to speak a bold Truth, upon your Principles, none but an English-man, who has more Courage than Brains, wou'd expose his Person, and run the Risque of his Life in a Battel, or in the Trenches, did he not believe to the utmost, and strive to have Hope that he shall come off safely. 'Tis certain he must never consult his Reason after your exact Method, nor know the Cheat of future Hopes and Fears, for this wou'd turn him often a-drift, (a civil Phrase for running away) it wou'd shew him a great deal of harm in such a Venture; no less than the Hazard of all his Satisfaction and Happiness in this World, and that without any Advantage of Recommendation to another. I question much whether the Prowess of our Invincible General, great as it is, wou'd ever have been able to've given us occasion for One Te De-

The DEDICATION.

9

um, were his Army compos'd of such Men of Wit, and did they allow themselves time to think: Unless he had the Happiness to insure them in his Good Fortune, as well as to inspire them with his Valour.

A sorry Roman, who knew no better than to return to his Plough from the Head of a Triumphant Army, to dine upon Turneps, dress'd by his own victorious Hands; and who like a very Rustic, chose to eat in Earthen Dishes rather than have a Service of Plate; such an one might prefer the good of his Country, future Fame, and a fine Post in Elysium, before his Life, and like those Warlike Enthusiasts of whom we read in Antient History, Curtius, and the Decii, devote himself for the safety of his Country: But for Men perfectly well instructed in the noble Mystery of good Eating and Drinking, and all the other requisites to a voluptuous Life; Men who have the Fortitude to let the Cries and Tears of whole Troops of Orphans and Widows go unregarded, but who will suffer no part of Voluptuousness to pass by them, nor meanly curb any of their loosest Desires;

Desires; sparing neither Pains nor Cost to taste; do I say? rather to Wallow in every Delight; for such as these to leave the Delicacies of the Town for the Fatigues of a Campagne, were most Unreasonable, and must not be expected. Unless that Anti-saving of Souls which is now the Heroic Passion of your exalted Spirits, and is become in a manner your chief Care, and the very end of all your Consultations, has inspir'd you with that hopeful Project of instructing the Valiant Youth of the Nation, to reconcile the Luxuries of their Winter Quarters to the Rigors of a Camp. For thank our Stars! neither is our Climate so bad, nor our Discipline so severe, as that Britains shou'd be forc'd to Live like Swedes. Far be such Manners from us! be they left to Unpolish'd Northern Heroes, whose want of Goust suffers them to relish nothing but Prudence and Justice, Temperance and Fortitude, an unblemish'd Faith, and spotless Honour.

AND by the way, it may be a Problem worthy the Resolution of your Famous Assembly, why a Prince in the Vigour of his
Youth

The DEDICATION.

11

Youth and a full Tide of Prosperity, whose Understanding keeps pace with his Courage, whose Wisdom is as Consummate in Forming his Designs, as his magnanimous Soul is Undaunted and Happy in the Execution, whom no Difficulties can stop, no seeming Impossibilities discourage, who is not less Victorious in the Cabinet than in the Field; how comes it that such a Prince shou'd find no Pleasure but in the Paths of the severest Vertue and real Glory? That he shou'd value nothing like his Bible, and tho' he studies it daily, and conforms himself to its Rules, be of so sound a Judgment, and clear a Head, as to be wholly incapable of all sorts of Pannic?

BUT why do I mention such little Heroes, as are forc'd to seek occasions Abroad, of shewing their Conduct and exercising their Valour? Your perfect Heroism makes Opportunities, and finds in every Place an ample Theatre for your Merits. The Bath, the Wells and every Fair, each Chocolate, Gaming House and Tavern resounds with your Noble Exploits. Never were any Men's Inventions so Fruitful in Ways and Means to cultivate their Notions, and spread their Examples!

amples! 'Tis to this Industry, that Her Majesty and the Illustrious House of Hanover are oblig'd for the Pains you take in the Education of such a hopeful Race as your towardly Kitlings! Who being got above all sorts of Pannic, and set loose from all Reverence for Oaths, which are an Appeal to an invisible Being, whom you know little of, and to whom you say, Depart from us, may be able to beat the French King at his own Weapon, and to Triumph over him as much in the glorious Conquest of Pacts and Treaties, as your fellow Subjects do in taking Cities and subduing Armies.

SOME few mean Souls, who wou'd fain pass for Generous or Charitable, bestow now and then a scanty Alms and sorry Pittance, upon a Relation, a Neighbour, or who comes first to hand, just enough to keep their Heads above Water, not to remove or end their Misery, but to continue it in the bare Preservation of a wretched Life. They who desire to be more taken notice of, contribute perhaps to the building or repair of a Church, and shew their Value for Religion by the Proportion between their Offerings to the Temple
and

and their Bounty to the Theatre; or perhaps they bequeath Money to their Heirs to found an Hospital. Your Liberal Souls above this sordid Management, shew daily (perhaps I ought to except Sundays, and perhaps not) so great a Contempt of Wealth, as to risque no inconsiderable part of your Fortunes upon a Card or Die!

TO say all in a Word, lesser Patriots do but venture their Estates, or Lives at most for the Public, and have a present return of Honour and Reputation for it, when Envy will allow it 'em, and that they meet with Grateful Fellow-Citizens; besides what will come in hereafter, when they are got out of the Reach of Detraction, and stand in no Bodies way. But the Grandeur of your Minds, and your Natural Humanity, which incites you as Fathers of your Country, to render Happy a considerable part of Mankind by your Care, spurs on your Noble Resolution to sacrifice your very Souls, and all your Hopes of Eternity, for their Encouragement and Example; and to confirm them in that profound Maxim, That a Bird in the Hand is worth two in the Bush, notwithstanding

withstanding that a Man may infallibly take the Two if it be not thro' his own Fault. Nor can it be deny'd to your immortal Renown, that neither the Credit of a Court, the Power of a Nobility, nor the Awfulness of a Church, can give Religion Protection, since you have wittily and ingenuously dress'd her up in the Habit of Imposture, and as such Arraign'd her in every Shape and Appearance. She only finds an Asylum in our Sovereign's Breast, for you pursue her to the Palace Gates! The obstinate Vertue and Piety of the Queen, 'tis true, remain unconquer'd, nothing but the Reduction of these is wanting to your Triumphs. For there are among those whose Business is Religion, Men so far from Biggotttry, such avow'd Enemies to Superstition, and to any thing called by these Names, that tho' they do not think it Decent to chant Encomiums upon all your Actions, yet are such excellent Distinguishers, as not to confound the Less with the More Praise-worthy. They have so much Reverence for the Vulgar, and common Opinion, as not to Applaud what these are pleas'd to call Profane Cabals;

The DEDICATION.

15

Cabals; but they rejoyce however in the good Effects of them. They don't justify you as Atheists, but they tolerate you as Deists and Arians Socinians, by a peculiar Act of Indulgence over and above the Act of Toleration; and they Adore you as Patriots. They expect not that you shou'd be without Fault, alas! we live not in Plato's Commonwealth, but in the Dregs of Gothic Monarchy! Your public Spirit, your honest and unwearied Industry, per fas & nefas, to serve your Country, are Vertues that atone for every thing!

MAY the Government Reward you according to your Merits, and the signal Services you perform! If any one suspects your Allegiance to your Prince, because of your avow'd Opposition to the King of Kings, and is therefore apt to raise Calumnies against you, and trouble the Repose of the Nation with needless Fears and Jealousies; let such an one know that it is the Felicity of the present Age to reconcile Contradictions, and no Men more fit to do it than your Witty Selves. For this Reason then, it wou'd be the highest Ingratitude and want of Conduct, not to fix you in Places of greatest Honour and Trust,

Trust, Power and Profit, for which you are
 so extremely well qualified, Profit at least,
 your vast Expences requiring this Supply:
 Whereas Honour and Trust may be left in
 Meaner Hands. However, be you in Place
 or out of it, so long as your Morals shine
 in their present Lustre, you cannot but be
 equally esteem'd, belov'd and adher'd to
 by One who makes no doubt of your Pro-
 tection.

———For in our scribling Times
 No Fool can want a Sot to praise his
 Lines :

The flattest Work has ever in the Court
 Met with some zealous *Ass* for its support
 And in all times a forward, scribling Fop
 Has found some greater Fool to cry him
 up.

Art of Poetry, Canto I.

A N
 ENQUIRY
 A F T E R
 W I T .



IT will *plainly appear* to the Reader, without an Advertisement, that I had a sort of Ambition to be an Author: Whether for my own *Private* Glory, or for Public Good, or both together, if he be an Artist he will discern. For these however separable in our Design, are, or ought to be, but one and the same in the Performance. Had the *Letter* that put this Thought in my Head come sooner to hand, or were I Master of more Time or greater Quickness, *you had had this more in Season*, that is, sooner, without Question. However, if one's Thoughts are Just and Good, they can never be *out* of Season; if False and Impious, they are never *in*.

BUT what shall a Writer do to please
 B both

both his Reader and himself? If his Understanding is of the Right Pitch, it will give him no little trouble to let it down so low as is necessary to take with the Many. And supposing he condescends to this, by what way and means shall he keep up his Character among the Knowing? Learning is given up to Pedants; Good Sense is discern'd only by the Few who have it; for one may modestly say, that it is not the Birth-Right of every Reader. Tho' more are Born to, than make Use of, it; the Right Use, at least, and don't put it *à fonds perdu*, in an Annuity for Life. To be Witty, if a Man knows how, is the only way to please. Wit is the Salt that gives a *gout* to any Carrion: Nothing so Profane, or Lewd, but shall be relish'd if it pass for Wit. Hence it is that few Men, if any, have the Continency to keep a Witicism to themselves, tho' the bringing it into Company costs them ever so dear. Pardon me therefore, gentle Reader, that I am no more able than other People, to conceal my Witty Thoughts, or what I take to be so.

I shou'd now fall into a Method, define Wit, describe it by infallible Characters, and give a hint where, and for what, it may be Purchas'd. I say *Purchas'd*, for doubtless it wou'd be a Grievance not to be endur'd by an *Inlightned People*, if Wit shou'd not be Vendible as well as every other

other thing, except an **Honest** Man and his **Inflexible** Conscience. But let it be remember'd, that it is of the very **Essence** of Wit to be out of Rule, and above all Measure. The **Brilliant** Thought is to be taken as it comes, and not awkwardly ty'd to a Hundred dull ones, for Order's sake. Besides, **Method** is a **Restraint**, not to be suffer'd by **Free Writers** in a *Free Nation*. So **Free** that not any thing is sacred enough to be **Privileg'd**; not our **Laws**, nor our **Religion**, not our **Sovereign**, nor our **GOD**. Perhaps our **Senators** and their **Dependents** may be excepted; but not out of any **Reverence** to their **Character**, but thro' a certain *Panic* we are thrown into upon **Consideration** of their **Power**. **Power** which tho' single **Persons** may have the **Goodness** not to **Use**, yet **Bodies** of **Men** seldom fail to exert in **Vindication** of their own **Authority**.

It is to be hop'd that we are not in search of *Fairy* Treasure, but that there is really such a thing as **Wit**; tho' 'tis not to be discern'd by every **Eye**. For why shou'd some **Men** lose their **Friends**, others their **Preferment**, some their **Lives**, and too many their **Souls**, for a **Jest**, if there were nothing in it? or nothing to the **Purpose**? Unless **Wit** and **Fool**, as contradictory as they appear, are only different **Expressions** of the same **Thing**. And if **Words** are the **Dress** of **Thought**, as some have

AN ENQUIRY AFTER WIT.

call'd 'em, then Wit is taken to be our Holy-day Clothes, Lace and Embroidery, which few are of Ability to wear every Day: But Words without any determinate Thought or Meaning, may well be reckon'd a sort of Scare-Crow. And there are, and these not the worst Judges, who affirm, that if one takes but the Courage to face our Gallant Wits, how glaring soever they appear at a distance, when he comes up to them, they will be found to be no better than Scare-Crows.

HAPPY wou'd it be for us poor Writers, to have a Standard fixt whereby to judge of Wit. Provided that *Magistracy* does not *interpose* in the Business, it being a *hard matter* (in the Opinion of some *Beaux Esprits*) *for a Government to settle Wit.* Tho' a very easie thing to my L*** and his Friends, who are us'd to examine things by a better Standard than that of Fashion, or the common Taste. For doubtless my L***, especially if we suppose him to be a Rich Lord, abounds in Wit. *Boileau* shall be my Voucher, *Quiconque est Riche a tout*, &c. Nor can he and his Friends, those Noble Actors! do a more considerable Service to Mankind, than by putting their Stamp upon Genuine Wit; that the spurious may no longer pass among us, at least not under their Protection. Much time and pains wou'd this save us, to be laid out to better account; it wou'd keep us from cracking our Brains,

disturbing

Letter concerning Enthusiasm, p. 31. p. 6.

disturbing the Public, and damning our Souls, in prolling after somewhat Witty, and New, and out of the Way. Tho' after all, our Labour is commonly to little purpose; thro' a *strong Imagination* we appear very great *Wits* to our selves, and very *foolish* to other People. Few being Able, or Kind enough to shew us where we fail, and to put us upon the Right Scent. And they are yet fewer who have the Wit to profit by such Counsels, and to be duly sensible of such a Favour. It being Infallibly True, that *a Fool is Wiser in his own Conceit, than seven Men who can render a Reason.*

WE are indeed very far from being agreed concerning Wit; it is a much more uncertain and arbitrary thing than either Reason, or Religion. He who will but honestly set about it, may distinguish these by a little Application. For Truth carries its Evidence along with it, and shines by its own Light: And True Religion has its Infallible Criteria. No Man of tolerable Sence, but can discern Reason when she is on his side; in other Cases, he is just as much an Enemy to Reason, as she is opposite to him. But as for Wit, neither the Men who are *all Air and Humour*, a Temper which thro' Civility I shall not call *Inconsiderateness*, or *Madness*, as a certain *Letter* unluckily defines it; nor those who delighting in a *sober kind of Chearfulness*, (the *Good Humour* of that Writer,) are a degree, or so, re-

lb. p. 34.

lb. p. 21.

lb. p. 36.

P. 60. mov'd from the Mansions of the other;
 none of these have as yet *settled with them-*
 selves any Notion of Wit. Its Patrons have
 indeed acted their parts so unskilfully, have
 so *puzzled* and confounded both themselves
 P. 58. and their Neighbours, with *odd and con-*
 trary Stories told up and down concerning
 Wit, that it will be a very hard Task to
 P. 31. *preserve Wit at all in the World.* Liberty
 having been assum'd of late, to put off any
sordid Jest, mere Drollery or Buffoonery, un-
 P. 17. der the Name of *Wit*, and by this *Imposture*
 to take with the *Men of Sense and Breeding*,
 as they wou'd be thought. Nor is it easy
 to distinguish the *finer and truer Wit* from
 the *sordid Jest*, the *Ridicule* from the *Buf-*
foonery; both having stood the *Test of*
Bart'lemy Fair; been daily *swallow'd* by,
 and had the Approbation, the *Presence* at
 least, of the Men of Wit, the Great *Vulgar*
 as well as the Small.

EVEN the celebrated *Letter to my Lord*
 What-de-ye-call-him? can't maintain its
 Character: Tho' one wou'd think, Chri-
 stians might easily be agreed in their Opi-
 nion of its Merits. Some are pleas'd to
 reckon it a very poor, incoherent, contra-
 dictory, senseless, Piece; weak in every
 thing but Malice to Religion, and even to
 GOD Himself; which it vents without
 Fear, or Wit, any farther than a chiming
 Period, or a far-fetch'd *inuendo* can pretend.
 By others it is cry'd up as a *Non-Pariello*,
 for

for Language, Thought, and all that——
 'Tis industriously spread in the Nation ;
 put, by way of ABC, into the hands of
 every young Fellow, who begins to speak
 great swelling Words, against what he Will
 not Understand, because he is Resolv'd not
 to Practise : And sent, by way of Mission,
 into Foreign Parts, upon that *hopeful Pro-*
ject ! which is now the Heroic Passion of
exalted Spirits, the saving of Men's Sense,
 by the Damning of their Souls ! A *New sort*
of Policy, unknown to Mankind, till Wits
 had the Condescension and Goodness to be-
 come Patriots. For until this Blessed Age
 of *Liberty !* which has made us so much
 Wiser than our Fathers, and that Men of
 Wit, found it turn to their Account to be
 Men of Business ; it was never thought a
 Service to the Public to expose the Esta-
 blish'd Religion, no not when it was ever
 so false and ridiculous in it self, to the Con-
 tempt of the People. The strongest Preju-
 dice and most plausible Argument, that the
 Wise and Good, among *the mighty Princes*
and Emperors of the World, had against that
 subduing Force of Reason and Miracle by
 which Christianity made its way thro' all
 Opposition, was the Danger of innovating
 upon the Receiv'd Religion and Faith of
 their Ancestors, the Maintenance of which
 was so necessary to the Public Peace, as
 they suppos'd.

THE *Divinest Man that had appear'd ever*
 B 4 in

P. 29.

P. 84.

P. 57.

in the Heathen World, than whom none had given a greater Testimony of an Invincible Goodness, or a greater Demonstration that there was no Imposture either in his Character or Opinions; for his Good Humour was such, as to be contented to be Ridicul'd: This very

Man, who in Reality lov'd the Public, and prov'd himself a true Patriot by preferring his Country's Interest at all times before his own Private Advantage; who study'd Universal Good, and to promote the Interest of the whole World, as far as was in his Power, and hereby arriv'd, one wou'd think, at the height of Goodness and that Temper which we call Divine; even Socrates himself lost his Life upon a Suggestion that he despis'd the Religion of his Country; and in the height of Witty Times, was condemn'd by the Voice of the People, the Witty People of Athens! whose Voice, without doubt, is esteem'd by Wits, more Divine than the Voice of GOD. 'Tis true, as the Letter observes, that his being most abominably ridicul'd by the wittiest of all Poets, in a whole Comedy writ and acted on purpose, was so far from sinking his Reputation, or suppressing his Philosophy, that they both increas'd the more for it. But it is also true, tho' the Letter out of a Flight of Wit and Ingenuity suppresses it, that for the present it cost him his Life, leaving him nothing besides the Conscience of his Integrity, which he guarded to the last with most scrupulous

P. 48.

scrupulous Niceness, and the Hope of Immortality, a sorry Consolation in the Opinion of our Men of Wit !

BUT their Opinion is not like the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*, Unalterable. They did not formerly think Religion so Useless to the Public, as by their way of treating it they seem to desire it shou'd now appear. So far from this, that one of their most formidable Arguments against Religion was its being a Political Machine, invented by Governors to manage and awe the People. But the Snaffle of Conscience is perhaps worn out ; it has been so much stretch'd and bent to contrary designs, as to become insignificant. And now that Men of Wit are pleas'd to study Politics, they have, it's like, discover'd a better Art to support Government, than our dull Forefathers were aware of. Our Rulers are indeed extremely oblig'd to them, that they will so far agree with *Antient Policy*, as to allow that *it is necessary a People shou'd have* P. 27, 28. *a Public Leading in Religion ; and that to deny the Magistrate a Worship, or take away a National Church, is as mere Enthusiasm as the Notion which sets up Persecution.* It must be confess'd they give an admirable Reason for this : 'Tis just of as much moment in their Opinion, as that *there shou'd be public Walks, as well as private Gardens ;* and a Man has just as much Reason to walk in one as in the other, as the *Fancy,*

cy, the *Natural Passion of Enthusiasm*, takes him!

P. 11.

BUT Politics apart; might I presume to give a Character of so great a Man as my Lord ***'s Correspondent, I wou'd say, that *Bayes* himself is many bars short of him, as having never wrote any thing comparable to this *Letter*. For a Good-humour'd Man, may by one strong *Aët* of an animated Faith, and a Good-will into the bargain, work himself up to a Belief of finding in it all the *Eloquence* of Tully, the *Wit* of Horace, the *Beauties* of Virgil, and *Demonstrations* of Euclid. Milton's Blank-Verse holds no comparison with what is every where sprinkled in our *Letter*; whose singular and choice Expressions, are suitable to its Justness of Thought, and Strength of Reasoning; to the Author's Zeal to *save Men's Sense*, by his new sort of *Saint-errantry*, and his *Soul-rescuing Spirit*. The *Letter*, in a word, is a very *Drawcansir* of a Book. It cuts and slashes all that Men have hitherto accounted Sacred; is so fierce a Hero, as to fright the Good Christian with its Pannies; snub up the Priests of all Denominations; baffle whole Armies of Martyrs; and does what it will, without regard to Truth or Justice, Decency or Good-Manners. Preferring that one Quality of turning every thing into Ridicule, above all your Moral or Christian Virtues put together.

P. 31.

POOR Bayes was but a puny in Wit, when

as an Ingenious Author tells us, *he libell'd the Court, blasphem'd Kings, abus'd one Nation, rail'd at the greatest part of another, and laid all the Indignities imaginable on the only Establish'd Religion; and all this out of a Natural Propensity he had to Malice, and a particular Inclination to doing Mischief.*

Preface to the Hind and Panther Transvers'd.

Our Letter-writer does somewhat more extraordinary; for endeavouring to put himself in as Good Humour as is possible; not only in ordinary good Humour, but in the best of Humours, and in the sweetest, kindest Disposition of his Life, he represents the greatest Men, Heroes, Statesmen, Poets, Orators, and even Philosophers themselves, as Enthusiasts, who, as he elsewhere explains himself, are no better than Madmen! He supposes Men in general to be wonderfully happy in a Faculty of deceiving themselves whenever they set heartily about it; and without doubt he speaks his own and his Lord's Experience. According to him, there is nothing wanting but an Inquisition, or some formal Court of Judicature, to bring back the whole Train of Heathen Gods, and make our cold Northern Island a new Arcadia, even in these latter Days of Wit; and tho' never was there in our Nation a time known, when Folly and Extravagance of every kind was more sharply inspected, or wittily ridicul'd! Religion, which has hitherto been venerated by Humane Nature, by the Wisest and Greatest Nations, and the most Excellent Persons among

Letter,

P. 34.

P. 51.

P. 82.

P. 8.

P. 32, 33.

P. 31.

P. 14.

among them, he wou'd have to be no better than a *Bart'lemy-Fair* business. And is so little afraid of thinking with his peculiar
 P. 36. *Freedom and Pleasantness, on such a Subject as GOD Himself, that Awful Majesty, the Thunder of whose Power the whole Creation cannot bear, nor any Mortal understand! as to represent Him, without Justice, or Honour, so Good as to be Good for nothing! Detested be the Blasphemy.*

Learn, learn, Crotona's Brawny Wrestler cries, Audacious Mortals, and be Timely Wise! 'Tis I that call, remember Milo's End, Wedg'd in that Timber which he strove to rend.

WELL! after such Freedoms as our Letter-writer has taken with his Maker, and my Lord ***'s encouraging, or at least not discountenancing him in it, they can't reckon it ill Manners if one asks them Mr. Bayes's Question, *What do you do when you Write and Read such Epistles? With what do you prepare your selves? The making use of stew'd Prunes, taking Physick, and letting Blood, are not powerful enough. Do you then swallow Opium, according to the method of no small Modern WIT? Or do you, in imitation of your great Predecessor and Master in Ridicule Hugh Peters, fortifie your selves with a Bottle, or so? All Nations, you know, have their Lymphaticks of this*
 P. 77. *kind,*

kind, who are thrown into such Transports as overcome their Reason. And Horace's P. 79.

Plenoque Bacchi pectore turbidum
LYMPHATUR——

seems to me to mean no more than that the good Poet had been a little too free with his *Falern Wine*. Be communicative, Gentlemen, I beseech you, it will never be allow'd that you study *Universal Good*, if you envy the Public so ~~Secret~~ a Secret. The many good People of your Principles and Acquaintance, who, as the Letter tells us, would have less Fear, and be easier in their P. 62. Minds, if they were but assur'd that they had only mere Chance to trust to, will be much oblig'd to you for so choice a Cordial. Besides, for ought one knows, it may enable us to discern, how those People come to be Good, who would be better pleas'd with the Frightful Notion of forlorn Nature, and a Fatherless World, than with the comfortable one of a common Parent, and the best natur'd Mind in the World; since we are told, it is P. 54. impossible that any but an ill-natur'd Man can wish against the Being of a GOD; which is wishing against the Public, and even against one's private Good too, if rightly understood. For until we are farther enlightned, our Authors sublime of Reason seems to us to have led him into that Figure in Wit, which Men, who aspire no higher than common Sense, are pleas'd to call a Contradiction.

BUT

- P. 54. BUT GOD be thank'd, there are not so many *Ill-natur'd Men* in the World as our Author imagines, such Enemies to the *Public*, and *themselves too*, as to wish against the *Being of a GOD*. He is exceedingly out in his Reckoning, when he tells us, that no
- P. 63. *Body trembles to think that there should be no GOD*. I can assure him that were it possible for such a Thought to enter into my Mind, I shou'd Tremble at nothing more; and I dare say there are very many Reasonable Persons who wou'd do the same. It is a Rational and Well-grounded Assurance of the Divine Presence, which I suppose one may be allow'd to say is much more able than the *Imagin'd* or even Real
- P. 13. *Presence of my Lord ****, and all his Friends about him, to support the Spirits, exalt the Genius, and elevate the Mind to the sublimest pitch that Human Nature is capable of; it is that Presence, and that alone, which makes the World a tolerable place, and a wise Man content to live among its Deceitful and Ill-natur'd Inhabitants. Cou'd I persuade my self there is no GOD, or that I do not owe the most absolute Obedience to all his Commands, and to this among the rest, that I maintain the Post He has plac'd me in, till He thinks fit to call me off, I wou'd not stay a Day longer in it; nor be tempted by all the Allurements the World could offer, to run the risque of that Pain and Dissatisfaction Human Nature

is expos'd to, and that Disgust and Emptiness inseparable from all Earthly Enjoyments.

BUT every one has their Taste. It is some Men's fault that they love to wallow in Sensual Delights; and they may call it mine, that I have little or no relish of Short, Transitory, Imperfect Pleasures; that I esteem it beneath the Dignity of a Rational Nature, to dwell upon the Pleasures of Sense, or to taste them otherwise than *en passant*, to support the Necessaries of the Body; and that the Pleasures of the Mind, tho' the proper Pleasures, and therefore the greatest, of a Reasonable Creature, consider'd as such, are too imperfect in this present Life to give us full Satisfaction. The wisest of Men having long since pronounced, that *in much Wisdom is much Grief*, and that *he who increaseth Knowledge increaseth Sorrow*. Therefore, as in case of Suffering, one wou'd not desire to fall into the hands of Men, whose tender Mercies are for the most part Cruel; but into the hands of GOD, for as His Majesty is, so is his Mercy: For the same Reason they wou'd depend upon Him only for their Happiness, whose Bounty is like His Nature, Infinite and Eternal.

AND yet my Notion of a Deity is very different from that which the *Letter* wou'd insinuate, and that excessive Goodness it is so fond of. My Idea of GOD is that which He who best knows His own Nature, *and*
is

- P. 61. *is so good as not to deceive us*, has been pleas'd to give of Himself. That he is *The LORD, the LORD GOD, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thousands, forgiving Iniquity, and Transgression, and Sin*, to those who Confess and Forsake them; and *that will by no means clear the Guilty*. For by continuing in their Impenitency, they make and judge themselves unworthy of His Favour, but proper Objects of His Unerring Justice, and that Eternal Punishment to which it most justly decrees all wilful and impenitent Offenders against the Divine Majesty: Who having had Good and Evil, Life and Death set before them, cannot reasonably think themselves hardly dealt with if they have their Choice. This is that *morally Excellent Notion*, which is most suitable to the Deity, as my Reason, making the best use of it I can, assures me. The *Goodness* above described, and not the same, and senseless Easiness the Letter sets forth, must needs be that *highest Goodness which must of necessity belong to GOD*, as being *without any Defects of Passion, Meannesses and Imperfection*, incident to Human Nature. For GOD wou'd not be so Good, if He were not perfectly Just; exact Justice being as *Morally Excellent* in it self, and as Essential to the Divine Nature, as the *Highest Goodness*. Nor cou'd He be what all but Atheists acknowledge,
- P. 63.

knowledge, infinitely Perfect, if either of them were wanting, or defective. But a Wit, as it seems, is so far from having gain'd any *consistent Notion of what is Laudable or Lovely*, that he is to be told, that the Queen is not the Less, but the More Good, in Her self, as well as to her Faithful Subjects, when she punishes Traitors, Disturbers of the Public Peace, Harden'd Villains, and such as Wilfully and Insolently despise her Authority. P. 64.

Wou'D it not be extremely pretty and improving, to hear a Man, Born under the Line, who had never been out of his own Climate, nor had convers'd with any but his own Countrymen, discourse of the Snows and Frosts in *Greenland*, and pretend to account for them point-blank to what the Inhabitants, and all who have been there affirm? Or to read a *Chinese* Letter concerning the Fashions and Intrigues of our *Belles* and *Beaux*, and the Manners of the *Europeans*? As Improperly and Inconsistently do our Men of Wit talk of GOD and Religion; tho' not so Divertingly. For the Subjects are *really too Grave*, to suffer a Man of Sense to divert himself with their Foolish, as well as Prophane and Impious way of treating them. Reverence for the Majesty of GOD, and Compassion for the Wretchedness of the unhappy Buffoons, take off his Thoughts from their Ridiculousness; and by exciting at once Horror

C

and

and Pity, make their foolish Mirth a real Tragedy. That Politic *Indian*, who thought to notch down all the King of *England's* Subjects upon his Stick, was a Wiser Person by far than our great Pretenders to *fine and true Wit*, and the *sublime of Reason*. For there was *some* Proportion between his Stick, and the *English* People; whereas there neither is, nor can be *any*, between Finite and Infinite. He had also the Wit to break his Stick, when he found the Impossibility of his Project; whereas our Libertines in Wit, as well as in Manners, go on as before, or with greater Confidence, and without any Sense of Shame, notwithstanding the Foils they have so often receiv'd.

- P. 49. A Wit has told us, that we cannot *examine Religion with too much Freedom and Familiarity, provided we treat it with Good Manners*. Be it so, on condition he will
- P. 64. give us *some consistent Notion of this Good Manners*: But by all that appears, he is by no means qualify'd to be Master of the Ceremonies. *Good Manners* has always been thought to imply Respect and Reverence, with a due regard to the Quality of the Person we treat with, and our own Condition, especially when we approach our Betters; and it also requires a decent and orderly Behaviour at all times. Is it then *Good Manners* to behave our selves towards GOD and Religion, which is His Law, in a way that wou'd cost us our Lives did we dare

to shew such Manners towards our Sovereign, and the Laws of our Country? Will the most Gracious and Merciful Prince allow his Subjects publickly to *Question* his Title; Revile his Ministers; *Take his Government roundly to task*; break his Laws, and *Ridicule* them; Proclaim that we submit to him *on weak and frivolous Grounds*, such as we can't admit but by putting *the Lye upon our Understandings*, and *assuming an Opinion contrary to the appearance of Things*; and that either he is no longer Prince, or else must be such a poor, insignificant thing, as we represent him, a very King *Log*, bearded by every Insolent, and with whom we may play at Leap-frog at pleasure? And to say no more of a Prince, wou'd it be thought Good Manners in Domestic to treat the Master of the Family in this Fashion? Wou'd he endure it, if he cou'd tell Twenty, even tho' he were of the sweetest and best Disposition imaginable?

THE *Jews*, who spit upon our Saviour, *Ridicul'd* Him with a Purple Robe, a Reeden Sceptre, a Crown of Thorns, bowing the Knee before Him, and Hailing Him *King of the Jews*, may it's like be thought to have treated Him with *Good Manners*, by those extraordinary *Good Men* and Christians, who are for putting Christianity to the *Test* of the *sharpest Ridicule*; for Trying it by a *Bart'lemy-Fair method*, as the most

See p. 52,
&c.

P: 45.

P. 44.

likely way of *suppressing* it! For the same Reason, who can doubt of their being the greatest Enemies to Popery, and fastest Friends to the Reformation, who with my Lord ***'s Correspondent suppose, that it cou'd not so well have stood the Force of a *Smithfield Booth*, as it did of a *more Tragical way*; and that a *Puppet-Shew* might have evaded the greatest force of our *Reforming Spirit*? Who tell us, 'tis fear'd many of our first Reformers were little better than *Enthusiasts*: And GOD knows, whether a *Warmth* of this kind did not considerably help us in throwing off that *Spiritual Tyranny*! Excellent Character of good Protestants!

P. 41.

A-kin to this, is a new Discovery of our *Letter-writer's*, which is, that our good Brethren, the French Protestants, or some of them, it seems, were the real Cause of the *Persecution* in their Country. And that not the Tyranny of the French King, but their own Zeal, their stirring the Coals, and the Spirit of Martyrdom, which they set a-

P. 43.

foot to a wonder, their Ambition of the Honour of a *Persecution*, and of those Probationary (by which, if our Author means any thing, one wou'd think he means *Purgatory*) Fires, which other Priests, besides those of the *Romish Church*, are earnest to light for them, if we will believe the *Letter*; are the Reasons of their Sufferings and Exile! There is indeed this small difference between

between the *Primitive* and the Modern Candidates for *Martyrdom*, that the former never contended for it with Weapons in their Hands: Or if they had them in their Hands, as is reported of the *Thebean Legion*, they quietly laid them down, lest by using the Sword in such a Case as this, they should justly perish by the Sword.

WE are oblig'd to the *Letter-writer* for better ways of trying a Man's *Goodness*, than by *Kind Blows* and *Flames*. Tho' it ^{P. 42.} may happen, that the *Cruellest Contempt in the World*, may be a severer Infliction upon some Tempers, than the sharpest Torments. But this is not every Man's Case; for many Great Men, and Witty ones too, may thank their Stars that they have not a nice Sense of Shame. Whether my Lord *** and his *Friend* are got above it, is more than I can tell. This I am sure of, that wou'd they be pleas'd to set an Example of that *Manners* and *Goodness*, so happily taught in the *Letter*, it wou'd be wonderfully Edifying! and be of greater Benefit to the Public, than any thing their *Sublime* ^{P. 12.} *of Reason*, their *Power of Eloquence*, and *noblest Actings* for *Mankind*, have hitherto produc'd!

THE *noblest Stage*, whereon to act so great a Part, wou'd be that Place, where my Lord, in the *Public Presence*, surrounded with his *Friends* and *Well-wishers*, is ^{P. 5.} engag'd in debating the *weighty Matters of State*.

P. 15. *State.* But perhaps his *Friend* is no Lord; and tho' *our Liberty* is very great, it may not *run so far*, as to permit him to come, with all his *Freedom, Pleasantness* and *Good Humour*, into the House of Peers, tho' he be allow'd to carry them at any time into the Presence of GOD Almighty! However, if for this, or other Reasons, the Experiment can't be made this Sessions, yet certainly nothing but *Malice, Ill-Nature*, or *Envy* at the Glory and Goodness of his Noble Patron, can hinder him when the *Season comes* that will *disengage* my Lord*** from the *weightier Matters of State*, and leave him at liberty to be entertain'd with a sort of *idle Thoughts*, upon his Return to — from giving him a Visit, suitable to the *Wit* of the Man who makes, and the *Goodness* of him who receives it. Allowing then that my Lord*** and his Friend are not one and the same Man, as it might very well be, since it is the Fashion for Men to write Letters to themselves: Let us for once suppose, that my Lord***'s Friend enters into his Lordship's Presence, without shewing any of those Civilities which Custom requires; is rude to the Servants sent to conduct him thither; and instead of making any Acknowledgment to his Patron, for those Bounties, that Favour and Protection, which are daily conferr'd on him in the most obliging and generous manner, salutes his Lordship with his Toes,

spits

spits in his Face, pulls him by the Nose, and turns him out of Doors, if the Servants are so tame as to suffer it, and my Lord not able to secure himself. A Man unacquainted with the *good Manners* of the Age, and the Liberties at present taken, wou'd be apt to call this Rudeness, and the height of Insolence; but we, who know better things, might wonder more if his Lordship shou'd resent it. For *nothing can* P. 36. *persuade us of Sullenness or Sourness in so good a Man.* One wou'd think it were *easie* P. 60. *to understand, that Provocation and Offence, Anger, Revenge, Jealousie in point of Honour or Power, love of Fame, Glory, and the like Defects of Passion, Meannesses and Imper-* P. 63. *fections, which we acknowledge such in our selves, which as good Men we endeavour all we can to be superior to, and which we find we every day conquer, as we grow better, can have no place in him, who is arriv'd at the height of Goodness, that Temper* P. 57. *which we call Divine; for surely he must know it well! We cannot have so injurious* P. 35. *a Thought of him, as to be afraid of bringing Good Humour into his Company: Whilst we* P. 56. *have this Thought, 'tis certain we can never converse with him, either to our Satisfaction, or to his Honour. If we are afraid to* P. 52. *treat him freely, we then actually presume him bad, and whilst we discover this mistrust of his Temper, and fear his Anger and Resentment in the Case of this Freedom, we*

- flatly contradict that pretended Character of Goodness and Greatness, which was ascrib'd
- P. 35. to him. *Nothing but Ill-Humour, either Natural or Forc'd, can bring us to such Thoughts of him: We cou'd never entertain them,*
- P. 36. *but because we conceive the Subject so like our selves, and can hardly have a Notion of Greatness without Stateliness and Moroseness;*
- P. 51. *notwithstanding those Original Ideas of Goodness, which Deputy Nature has implanted in us! However, that Temper of Resentment, and those Measures of Offence, which we vulgarly suppose may arise in good Men, even in my Lord ***, when great*
- P. 37. *Indignities are offer'd, are the just Reverse of that Character, which we own to be most divinely Good, when we see it, as we sometimes do; for, you must know, it is not common in Men of highest Power among us: If they pass for truly Good, (mark the Cadence, as well as the Sense) we dare treat them freely, Lampoon them at pleasure, and are sure they will not be displeas'd with this Liberty. They are doubly Gainers by this Goodness of theirs: For besides the opportunity it gives us of shewing our Wit, which cannot be too dearly purchas'd, the more they are search'd into, and familiarly examin'd, the more their Worth appears; and the Discoverer charm'd with his Success, of one sort or other, esteems and loves more than ever, when he has prov'd this additional Bounty in his Superior, and reflects on*
that

that Candor and Generosity he has experienc'd: For it must be suppos'd that the Man in Power, had formerly given the Man of Wit, a Purse, or a Place, or had already excus'd him from the Pillory and a Fine; otherwise I know not to what this New Bounty is *Additional*. His Lordship doubtless knows, and *knows more perhaps of this Mystery than any one*: Mysteries of State having a Meaning, and being Venerable things, whatever becomes of Mysteries in Religion. *How else shou'd he have been so belov'd in Power, and out of Power (hinc illa Lacrymæ) so adher'd to, and still more belov'd? Is not this a Mystery?*

ENOUGH has been said to shew how my Lord ***'s *Enthusiastic Friend*, ought to treat his Lordship, if he will be conformable to his own Principles, and Practise the *Good Manners* he teaches. By all as I can see his Friendship for that Great Man obliges him to do it, *were it for nothing else* P. 66. *but that his Lordship might learn and practise Goodness, and by this evident Proof, convince the World, that he really deserves that Love and Praise, which those who have* P. 60. *settled with themselves a Notion of what is Morally excellent, so lavishly bestow upon him. Till this is brought about there will be* P. 65. *little Glory in the Case; and his Lordship, tho' we shou'd suppose him ever so vain, wou'd have little reason to be contented. I can't indeed say How his Lordship Wou'd receive*

receive such *Freedom*, whether he wou'd smile upon his Friend, take him by the Hand and lead him to an Apartment ; or send him to *Moor-Fields*, to a Dark Room and a Doctor ; for I am wholly ignorant of my Lord ***'s *Taste*, not having the Honour to be one of his Familiars. Only, I can affirm from good Authority, that if it happen'd our Letter-Writer shou'd be so ignorantly bred, and of so remote a Province, as to have been out of the way of gaining some consistent Notion of Manners, and in the Case of his over-forward Zeal already mention'd, presume to treat his Patron with indecent Freedom and Disrespect, as some may think ; my Lord, in good truth, wou'd be ridiculous to take offence at this, and wou'd pass for extravagantly morose and ill-humour'd, if instead of treating the Matter in Raillery, he shou'd think in earnest of Revenging himself on the offending Party, who out of his Rustic Ignorance and ill Judgment, had not treated him with the Respect that is due to his Person and Quality !

BUT can it be suppos'd that my Lord does not understand Raillery ? that fine and true Wit that takes with the Men of Sense and Breeding ! that he is so Grave, so Formal, such a Coward in Reasoning, as to be afraid to stand the Test of Ridicule ? Can we believe he does not vouchsafe to descend a little into himself, and bestow some poor Thoughts upon plain Sense, and honest Wit

before

before he ascends into the higher Regions of P. 12.
 that Sublime of Reason and that Power of
 Eloquence which he discovers in Public? The
 Letter indeed insinuates, that he is not e-
 qually Master of them, in Private, cannot
 command them at any time alone, or with in-
 different Company, or in any Easy or Cool
 Hour, which may give a Formal Reasoner
 an unlucky Handle to argue, that his Elo-
 quence and Sublime of Reason are not Natu-
 ral: For what is Natural is Easy, and al-
 ways at Command; and if his Lordship's
 Sense and Rhetoric are not so, I fear they
 will do him little Honour. But perhaps
 our *Homer* nodded when he drew this part
 of his *Hero's* Character: Or else it may be
 a fine Stroke, to let the Reader see, that he
 is not a *Sycophant*, a mere *Parasite*, or *craf-* P. 55.
ty Beggar, but dares treat my Lord so Free-
 ly, as to Publish his Blemishes as well as his
 Beauties.

BE this as it may; 'tis certain my Lord
 *** can't want *Good Humour*, whether we
 consider him as a *Good Protestant*, or as a P. 41.
 Man of Sense and no *Enthusiast*. For *Good* P. 35.
Humour is not only the best Security against
Enthusiasm, but the best Foundation of Piety
and true Religion. He may indeed have too
 much of the *Spirit of Love*, too much *Hu-* P. 40.
manity, and Self-Preservation, to scandalize
 his Friends by Dying for Religion by the
 Hands of an Executioner, after the slavish
 way of many of our *Primitive Martyrs*, even ac-
 cording

- according to our own Accounts.* But doubtless, his Noble Courage won'd carry him on to venture All in a Field of Battle: Or if in his great Wisdom, it seems fitter for Men of his Endowments to stay at home and Govern the Nation, than to go abroad and Fight for it, if his Head is better than his Heart, and his Heroism lies more in Words than in Action; his Piety, however, is not the less, whilst in private *Junto's* he wittily Debates how Religion may be model'd, so as not to spoil *Good Humour*; and be secur'd without the Magistrates so much as seeming to *Interpose*. For shou'd the Government attempt to settle a precise Orthodoxy by Law; or to meddle with that wondrous Disposition in Mankind towards Supernatural Objects; that Idea of GOD, and those Natural Fears of being liable to His Justice when we break His Laws, which Men are really born to, and can hardly by any means avoid; shou'd the Magistrate meddle with this Passion any otherwise than by endeavouring by chearful ways to divert and heal it, we shou'd, if the Letter is in the Right, have as bad Divinity in a free Nation, such as ours, as they have in other Countries! For the best way in our Great Men's Opinion, is to remove the Terrors of Religion, the Melancholy and Formal manner of treating it, and to render it so gentle, that it may not disturb us in any Jollity. This wou'd, doubtless, recommend it to Men
- P. 30.
- P. 76.
- P. 26.
- P. 30.

Men of Wealth and Quality, who love their Ease and Pleasures, and can't endure the Thought of being call'd to account for following their own Humour. And he who prepares the way to such noble Profelytes, must needs be thought to have done a considerable Service to Religion!

The *Letter*, that Master-piece of Breeding, allows his Lordship, 'tis true, *the full Liberty of* P. 13.
reading no more than what he may have a fancy for, and with great Ingenuity and Truth,

acknowledges what he has writ to be a sort of *Idle Thoughts*, design'd only for *Amuse-* P. 5.
ment. But can we imagine his Lordship so

Rude as to take this Liberty? or that his exquisite Judgment and Taste will not discern the *Enthusiastic Friend* in every Period, tho' he has not *subscrib'd* his Name? And if my Lord amuses himself so far as to read the Letter, is it possible for him not to be in Love, passionately in Love, with that *height of Goodness* so admirably describ'd? P. 57.

He will doubtless be glad of all Opportunities to Practise, that so he may effectually Learn it, *were it for nothing else but that he* P. 66.

may have a tolerable Notion of Goodness, which a Man cannot *understand without being tolerably Good.* He will endeavour to

get rid of all those *Meannesses and Imper-* P. 63.
fections, those *Forms of Justice,* those *Degrees of Punishment,* and *Measures of Offence,* that P. 51.

Stateliness, that *Point of Honour,* *Love of* P. 60.
Glory, and the like, *which as good Men we*
endeavour

- P. 63. *endeavour all we can to be Superior to, and which we find we every day conquer as we grow better.* And because Religion, has, by the Ancients at least, been thought a matter of Greatest Consequence, and highly deserving our most serious and frequent Consideration; and that Modern Wits, the *Letter-Writer* especially, assure us we can
- P. 49. *never use too much Good Humour when we treat of Religion:* Therefore my Lord must
- P. 51. needs endeavour to keep himself, not only in Ordinary Good Humour, but in the best of Humours, and in the sweetest kindest Disposition of Life, that so he may be able to examine Religion with decent Freedom and Familiarity: And in this Honey Temper, we will suppose his Friend accosts him!

- P. 49. Nothing will be now wanting to complete my Lord's Good Humour, to give Testimony to the World of the Invincible Goodness of the Man, and to Demonstrate that there is no Imposture either in his Character or Opinions, but that a Puppet-show be acted next Bart'lemey Fair, in his Lordship's Honour. What an edifying Example will such a Scene of Wit and Goodness prove! How will it magnify
- P. 57. my Lord's Temper, that Temper which we
- P. 38. call Divine, to see him like the mighty Princes, and even Emperors of the World, be unconcernedly not only the free Censure of his Actions, but the most spiteful Reproaches and Calumnies, even to his Face! This will give
- P. 57. a more convincing Proof of his Love to the

Public

Public, and Study of Universal Good, than any of those great things he has hitherto perform'd, in order to *render happy a considerable part of Mankind under his Care*. It is a new way, I confess, of magnifying a Great Man's Goodness : But my Lord has less reason to object against it, than he has to dislike the *Fancy of acting Puppet-Shews* P. 46. in our Saviour's Contempt, and *suppressing* P. 45. *the Christian Religion in its first Rise*, by a *Bart'lemy Fair Method*. He himself is one of the finest Wits without question, no Man knows better the Worth and Beauty of a happy Thought, an Ingenious and Surprising Invention. If it happens that the Wit, that there is, lies only in the Oddness of the Thought, which takes us not with its Beauty, but with its Monstrousness ; 'tis to be hop'd that the Novelty may excuse the Rudeness in the one Case, a little better than the Outrageous Profaness and Blasphemy in the other. For *Religion is to be treated with Good Manners*, as the *Letter* P. 49. confesses, as well as his Lordship : And what is Sauce for a Goose, is Sauce for a Gander.

MEN of Quality must Pardon, I was going to say they are Oblig'd to, us, that we treat them after a Manner which they think proper for the Maker and Saviour of the World, and allow their Friends and Dependants to use towards Him. If they expect to be approach'd with more Respect, they

P. 60.

P. 34.

P. 35.

P. 52.

will be pleas'd, I hope, to publish the Ceremony. Otherwise an honest Man, who means no Hurt or Disrespect to any Body, may thro' want of *settling with himself the Notion of what is now-a-days reckon'd Morally Excellent*, fall into some *Doubts and Scruples*, thro' an Apprehension that there is some sort of Difference between GOD and Men, even *my Lord **** and the greatest of *his Friends*. Perhaps this may be thought only an Effect of *Devout Melancholy*; and therefore, as Demonstrations go, and following the Example and admirable Reasonings of the *Letter*, I shall endeavour to *Demonstrate*, that GOD and Men are pretty much upon a Level; for the ease of those *good People*, whose Humour might otherwise run the Danger of being spoil'd.

To begin then with our Demonstration; Who does not set a higher Value on a curious *China Jar*, than on the Man who made it? Especially if it has had the good Fortune to entomb the Heart of a Wit, to serve in the Cabinet of a *good Minister*, some *Prince or Father of a Country*, and to be valued by them? Whence it is evident that the Potsherds of the Earth may contend with their Maker! take His Providence roundly to task, Question whether He really Be, or not, Speak, Write of, and Demean themselves towards Him as they think fit, without any Breach of Decorum, or want of Manners! And if they are Men of might

ty Merit, such as *have rendred happy a considerable part of Mankind under their Care*, 'tis like they may be thought to do him Honor, by *thinking and speaking with Freedom and Pleasantness on such a Subject*, and *bringing their Good Humour into Religion*. For all the World knows that to treat our Equals or Inferiors Freely and Familiarly, is to treat them kindly; and that to enliven the Conversation with a little harmless Mirth, and to break a Civil Jest upon them, is the best Breeding!

BUT if this be the *Right Measure*, alas! for us poor *Britains*, as *free a Nation* as we think our selves! So long as the Court has *Credit*, the *Nobility Power*, the *Church*, or any thing else, has *Awfulness*, our *Liberty* is restrain'd, *Wit* in danger of being lost, and we deny'd the Privilege of making a full use of them. *Gravity* which is *of the very Essence of Imposture* still reigns too much among us; we are not yet at *Liberty* to carry the *Rule*, the *Infallible Rule of Ridicule* constantly with us, and to apply it freely to every thing, to see whether it will bear or no, and to find which are truly serious and which *Ridiculous*. We have indeed full *Liberty*, and we take it, to say what we please of *GOD*, and to question whether there be any Knowledge in the Most High; nor do we prosper the less in the World on the Score of this Freedom. But we shall never be a perfectly free Nation, till the Guards

D

are

- are remov'd, the Court Gates thrown open, and every body at Liberty to be as merry as they please with their Sovereign, *provided* they shew their *Manners*! The *Notion* of this *Good Manners*, is not yet well *settled*, I confess, for Doctors differ about it. But by what they have already taught us, *Ridicule* appears to be the main Branch of it,
- P. 60. or rather All in All, for it is the *Test*, the *Rule*, of *everything*! So that to bowe in the Presence, to Kneel and Kiss the Royal Hand, must needs be wrong, very wrong, and a Solecism in Wit and Manners. For it shews us to be so Ignorant and Ill-bred, as not to
- P. 36, 37. have *settled with our selves* the right *Notion* of *Majesty and Greatness*, which is, to be sure, all over *Goodness* and nothing else; but to *conceive the Subject so like our selves*, as hardly to have a *Notion* of it without *State-liness and Moroseness* accompanying it. Whereas this is just the *Reverse* of that *Character*, which we own to be most *divinely Good*; *Provocation and Offence*, and *Jealousy in point of Honor*, being the very *Picture* of *Tyranny* and *Ill-humor*!
- P. 60.

CAN any one doubt, after what the *Letter* has said of *GOD Almighty*, that a good Prince may not be told of his *Faults*? That we may not take his *Conduct* roundly to task, and get a *Place*, or an *Estate* by it?

P. 30. For a *Magistrate* tho' ever so *Vertuous* and *Wise* may be as soon *mistaken* as another *Man*; tho' the *Magistrate* was bred to his *Business*, and

and minds it; and the other Man's lies quite another way! And where *Jealousy of State* P. 15. restrains this *Freedom*, *Malice* and Arbitrary Power do certainly prevail: *It being Malice* P. 51. only, and not Goodness, that can make us afraid; if the *Letter-writer* is not mistaken.

AND farther, the *Men of highest Power* P. 37. among us, therefore much more Princes, who are often rob'd of their Power, even whilst they keep their Titles, Power which, if any thing, will require and command Respect; yet even these *Men of Power*, if they PASS for truly Good, we dare treat them freely, and are sure they will not be displeas'd with this Liberty. Mark the Accuracy, as well as the Manners of this Period: If they PASS, &c. for to be truly Good, and to PASS for such, are two very different Things. A Man, especially of Place and Power, who is truly Good, and has no blot to be hit, is such a troublesome, unmanagable piece of Perfection, that one knows not what to do with him. He cannot Veer with the Times, nor suit his Principles to the Occasion. So long as you do what is Just and Fair he will adhere to you tho' he gets nothing by it, and is not to be bought off, nor threatned, to the contrary side. Be but true to your self, constant to those Principles, that Honor and Integrity, which made you fit for his Friendship, and if he is once your Friend, you may be sure of him. But tho' you were a Brother or a Father he wou'd

abandon you when he finds you resolv^{ed} to forsake the Just and Honorable Path. Con-
 scious of real Worth, he looks that Favours
 shou'd seek him out, but can never stoop to
 make court after them. He has kept his
 Tongue from all sorts of evil speaking; and
 his Hands from all kinds of Bribes: Nei-
 ther thirsts after Blood, nor Power; nor is
 greedy of Riches, or the Pleasures they
 purchase. He wou'd do what becomes him,
 what is Fit and Reasonable, Just and Good,
 tho' no body shou'd take notice of it, or
 tho' he shou'd be condemn'd for doing it:
 And he looks upon the Ignorance and Stu-
 pidity, the Malice and Envy of Mankind,
 as a greater Injury to themselves than to
 him. Whereas the Man who is so Wise as
 only to PASS for truly Good, has nothing
 of this haughty Stiffness; he is quite ano-
 ther Creature, so docile, so complying in
 his Turn, that you may *treat* him as *freely*
 as you please, so long as he has occasion for
 you. He must keep up his Character and
 Popularity, by the same humble ways that
 gain'd them, which another Man might think
 beneath him. Shou'd his Confidants pre-
 sume to take some Liberties, tho' he under-
 stands himself too well not to Resent and
 Punish it in a proper Season; yet for the
 present he may it's like think it better to
 pass them over, than to provoke his Friends
 to unseasonable Discoveries. It being unfit
 that the World shou'd be let into the Know-
 ledge

ledge of that *Discoverer*, who is *charm'd* P. 37.
with his Success in finding his Patron's Ver-
 tue no better than his own; for this is the
 most universal Charm against Envy and Ill-
 will, and the Opposition they occasion.

OUR Betters, as they reckon themselves,
 on account of some little Advantages owing
 to Chance much oftner than to Merit, wou'd
 indeed fain persuade us, that Order, and the
 State of the World, make several Duties and
 Distinctions in their Favour, necessary. *The* P. 50.
Melancholy way in which we have been taught
 Good Manners and our Distance, by their
Scandahum Magnatums, and Solemnity set on
 Foot by the cunning Formalists of the Age to P. 20.
 support their *Impostures*, makes us unapt to
 approach them in Good Humor; or to speak
 of them with all that *Freedom and Pleasant-* P. 36.
ness which the Subject will bear. And it is,
 in truth, *the ill Lives of the Great People*, P. 15.
 that gives them *Sullenness and Sourness*; fills
 them with *Wrath and Fury, Revenge and* P. 50.
Terror. Their Consciousness of *Imposture*,
 in their professed Zeal for the Public, makes
 them *abhor and dread nothing like good Hu-* P. 49.
mor; and expect not only to be exempted P. 15.
from Criticism, but even flatter'd with the
highest Art. So that if we seek their Favor,
 we must use all Arguments, right or wrong, P. 52, 53.
 to patch up Objections against their Manage-
 ment of Affairs. Must make a Merit of say-
 ing all the Good we can of them, at the very
 stretch of our Reason, and sometimes quite

P. 15. *beyond it. Put the Lye upon our Understandings, as much as in us lies, resolving to bear nothing that may be said against them. Which is such a Restraint upon the impartial and free Censure of Manners, as does in effect destroy the Benefit of it in the whole! All which is evidently prov'd in the Letter, as you will find by the Citations in the Margent.*

P. 26. *AND to this rare piece do we also owe the Solution of many other Difficulties; as well as Directions, if our Governours are so wise as to follow them, how the Magistrate may be an Artist, and instead of Sword and Fasces, Caustics, Incisions and Amputations, may have nothing to do but to use the softest Balms, to sooth and satisfy the Peoples Passion, and by chearful Ways, by a Public leading them to a Smithfield Booth, no doubt, be able to divert and heal it!*

P. 12. *I have often wonder'd why our Laws, good and excellent, as they are, as being made by Men of Sense, Men of the highest Power and greatest Wit, and who are the noblest Actors for Liberty and Mankind; that Laws, even after our own Hearts desire, as they must needs be since they are of our own making, shou'd yet be the ruin of many an honest Man, who has the Misfortune to meet with a Litigious and Cunning, a Rich or Powerful Adversary; That mere Forms, Quirks and Subtilties, shou'd prevail over Reason and ~~the~~ Equity of Things; so that the Remedy is often worse than the Disease; and even in the last*

last Resort, it is not to so much purpose to have the best Cause, as to have the greatest Number of Friends. Whence it happens, that under the most excellent Constitution and gentle Government in the World, the Oppression we suffer, not from our Governours, but from our Fellow-Subjects, is enough to make a wise Man mad. The Letter of the Law being so much abused, as to render the Reason and Design of it ineffectual: And a Man had better sit down contented under no small Injuries, than endeavour to redress them, which commonly has no other effect than the multiplying of his Wrongs, and at last undoing him.

BUT the *Letter* to my Lord * * * has made my Wonder cease; for it plainly shews us the Original of all this Mischiefe, which can be nothing else but *Gravity*; nor can there be a *better Remedy* than by *apply-* P. 19.
ing the Rule of Ridicule! O say the *Cunning* P. 20.
Formalists of the Age, the Subjects are too P. 17.
Grave——Not at all, say I; for if our Eternal Inheritance must pass the *Test of Ridicule*, why not our Temporal? We value our Estates and Persons, our Lives and Reputations, and we do well in it; but our immortal Souls, if we have any, and it has not yet been prov'd, or so much as render'd probable that we have none, are, I shou'd think, much more valuable. Besides, Wit is the Language of the Bar, he who has the best knack at Punning, who can equivocate

with the nicest Art, stands fairest for Success; Men of large Consciences, or of none, who are hardned against an Oath, wou'd, it's like, be unable to bear the Push of a home Jest. Nor does Learning make half so many Discoveries, as Quickness and Wit, so that the only wonder remaining is, why none of the great Oracles of the Law, who liv'd before our *Letter-writer*, should hint at this Project!

P. 21.

IT was heretofore the Wisdom of some wise Nations, as the Letter informs us, to let People be Fools as much as they pleas'd, and never to punish seriously what deserv'd only to be laught at, and was best cur'd by that innocent Remedy. And by this chearful and good humor'd Method, all those Dis-mal Tragedies which are in reality acted in the World, and which according to my Apprehension, render Life so Tragical; not only in Campagnes and Seiges, but even in Courts of Judicature (as they are call'd) and in twenty other Places, not excepting a sick Man's Chamber, were wisely prevented. There was then none of those Disturbances and Fears, Losses and Pains to four our Good Humor, which the Imposture of Physicians, the Cunning of Lawyers, the dilatoriness of Courts, and the Brutality of Soldiers do now give us.

P. 29.

P. 31.

BUT a new sort of Policy being introduc'd, and the freedom of Raillery taken away, we have been made to leap the Bounds of Natur-

ral

ral Humanity, and taught in a Serious, Grave, Formal Manner the way of plaguing one another most Rationally. Suing, vexing, tormenting, starving and destroying each other, by Bills and Swords, by Pills and Bullets, is now the Heroic Passion of exalted Spirits, and P. 29. the Maintenance of these is become in a manner the chief care of the Magistrate, and the very Business of Government it self!

A poor Man, tho' ever so deserving, and in the greatest want of Money to keep up his Good Humor, can't take a Purse, tho' in the best of Humors, and in the sweetest, P. 31. kindest Disposition of his Life, but he must be cruelly truss'd up for it; and undergo such Forms of Justice, such Degrees of Punishment, and that Temper of Resentment and Indignation, which the Malice of my Lord Chief Justice and his Colleagues shall be pleas'd to Inflict! By which Inhuman Method, more resembling the Weak, Womanish, P. 39. and impotent part of our Nature, than the Generous, Manly and Divine, many a Good Fellow, who wou'd have spent his Life in the best Humor in the World, is debar'd of the Means of doing it. And rendred uneasy all his Days, by the Dread and Suspicion, of the Judge's Malice. Malice to be sure, for it is MALICE only and not GOOD- P. 61. NESS, that can make us affraid! Had these Judges but the common Sentiments of Humanity, they wou'd be persuaded to believe, that nothing can so well become them

P. 63. *as the highest Goodness. That Goodness which the Letter-writer ascribes to GOD, without any of those Defects of Passion, those Meanesses and Imperfection, which as good Men we endeavour all we can to be superior to, and which we find we every Day conquer as we grow better.*

P. 60. *That is, to speak out plainly, without any of that Offence, Anger, and the like, which for want of settling with our selves any Notion of what is morally Excellent, we miscall Order, Justice and Right; and under the Beggary Refuge of these good Words, take upon us to deny our Fellow-Creatures the Innocent Liberty of making as free with our Estates, Reputations, Families and Persons, as their Necessities, or that laudible Desire of keeping up their Good Humor, does according to all appearance of Things, render Necessary.*

P. 20. *THIS is so true a thing in it self, and so well known for Truth by the Cunning Formalists of the Age, that they can better bear to have their Impostures, that Inhumanity which they gild with the specious Name of Law and Justice, rail'd at by the poor Criminals at the Bar or Gibbet, with all the Bitterness and Vehemence Imaginable, than to have themselves touch'd ever so gently by a Witty Man, in the Way of Raillery. Tho' their Sessions, their Circuits, their Robes, &c. give them trouble enough, yet will they not be persuaded to change them for the more Agreeable as well as Infallible Rule, propos'd*

in the Letter, even the Ridicule. They know P. 20.
very well, that as Modes and Fashions, so
Opinions, tho' ever so Ridiculous, are kept up
by Solemnity. Hence it is that they are so P. 17.
afraid to stand the Test of Ridicule; and
with a Formal Air, O! say they, the Subject
is too grave.—— And take it for granted,
upon no better ground, than that their An-
cestors, time out of mind, have been of this
Opinion, and that a few formal Arguments,
which one pert Jest wou'd blow to nothing,
prove it to be the Sense of Mankind; And
having thus given up their preliminary Right P. 19.
of Judgment, and resolv'd never to Try, nor
to apply the Ridicule; under a Presumption
of Gravity, they allow themselves to be most
Ridiculous, and to admire profoundly the most
Ridiculous Things in the World, at least for
ought they know. For by their obstinate
refusing to carry the Rule constantly with P. 18.
them, and to apply it freely, not only to the
Things about them, but to themselves; they
both lose the Measure in themselves, and
in every thing besides.

WERE it not for this, that those Formal P. 20.
Notions, which grew up in an Ill Mood,
and have been conceiv'd in Sober Sadness,
are not allow'd a fair Tryal in a sober kind P. 21.
of Cheerfulness, and by a more easie and plea-
sant way of Thought, who wou'd whip a
poor Fellow at a Post, or hang him up,
merely for endeavouring to Live in the
World, to keep up his good Humor, and
follow

- P. 30. follow his Inclinations? Much less put a *good Humor'd* Man in the Pillory, for no sort of Crime, but a little harmless Wit, and because his Superiours do not understand Raillery! If *we* cou'd but *be trusted*, and allow'd to have *Honesty and Wit enough* for our own turn; if *Magistracy* wou'd not impertinently *interpose*, 'tis likely *we shou'd have as much Ability in our Temporal, as in our Spiritual Affairs*, and there wou'd be no such thing as Judges upon the Bench, nor Criminals at the Bar. Were *Matters ballanc'd*, were no other *Force* us'd but that of *Wit and Raillery*, *Reason* wou'd have fair play, Mankind wou'd flourish. Wonderful wou'd be the *Harmony and Temper* arising from all these *Contrarieties*, they wou'd make up that *right Humor*, which the Letter contends for, as going more than half way towards *Thinking rightly* of every thing. And Men being mildly treated, and let alone, they wou'd never Rage to that degree, as to occasion *Blood-shed, Wars, Persecutions, and Devastations in the World*; which proceed from nothing else but their being put out of Humor, by not being permitted to do what they Will.
- P. 30. It is indeed as *hard a matter* for a Government to keep us *Sober and Honest*, as to settle Wit. We may have the Wit, it's like, to keep our selves so, when no *Prejudice* lies in the way. But it is in vain for the *Magistrate* to meddle, or to suppose he can keep

us in order, when it comes *a-cross* to our Interest or Pleasure. He can't be in all Places at all Times, neither Personally nor by his Officers. He has no Cognizance of our Crimes many times, and sometimes wants Power to punish them. A cunning Evil-doer, especially if Popular and High in Power, is too frequently an Over-match for the Magistrate, and whilst he most notoriously violates the Design of the Law, escapes the Reach of it by Sculking within the *Letter*. The Sense of a Divine Presence, and a future Reckoning might do much towards the preserving of Sobriety and Honesty in the World. But *in these* P. 31. *latter Days of Wit*, the Men of Good Humor have us'd all their Art to make that Sense *decline*, and to bring it in *less request than formerly*. Whether *Magistracy* will P. 30. *vouchsafe to interpose* in a matter that so nearly concerns it, is out of my ken. According to the Fancy of our *Letter-writer*, P. 32. and if he has not made a wrong Calculation of Human Nature, by attending too much to his own Temper, the way to make People pursue a thing, is to forbid it under *grievous Penalties*. I hope he will pardon me, if I think a little better of our Race, as not finding my self quite so perverse; especially since the Court of *Augustus* can't avoid being thought much in the wrong, if Penalties were a greater Inducement to the *humor of Versification* than Rewards. Truth indeed,

P. 7.

indeed, which is *the most Powerful thing in the World*, will make its way, not Because of *Penalties*, but Notwithstanding them. But what if the Magistrate, as well as other Men, has a Mind to shew his Wit? Why then let me presume to tell him, that he can't have a better opportunity, or be put to a greater Tryal of his Skill, than by Governing a People who have not the Fear of GOD before their Eyes.

P. 21.

THE *Letter*, as must be own'd, has said enough to convince a Libertine, who does not want Wit to improve by such extraordinary and artful hints; that *Magistracy* itself is a Grievance and Restraint upon the Liberty of a free People. Nor is it to be deny'd, that if *the Mind were at liberty to bear what can be said against the Ridiculousness* of some of the Sons of Adam's Lording it over the rest of their Brethren, and engrossing to themselves the sole Use of those Advantages, of which they are only Stewards, and not Proprietors; things would be reduc'd to a greater Equality, and there would not be so many, and so just Complaints, as are at present in the World. Can any thing be more ridiculous, than that the Fool shou'd have Money enough to throw away upon every Extravagancy, whilst the Ingenious is cramp'd for want of it in his generous Undertakings for the Good of Mankind! That the Liberal-minded Person shou'd have nothing to be-

flow,

flow, and that there shou'd be no end of
 the Miser's Acquisitions! How unnatural is
 it that an idle, useless Wretch shou'd gorge
 himself to Uneasiness and Sickness, at an
 Expence which wou'd keep many Indigent
 Families from starving, who are useful in
 their Generation! What more absurd, than
 that a wise and worthy Person shou'd be
 neglected and despis'd, not only by the
 Vulgar, but by those who wou'd be thought
 better Judges, merely for want of Out-side,
 and such things as add no real Virtue to
 any Man; but do very much lessen his,
 who possesses, and does not rightly use
 them! Whilst every Body courts and crin-
 ges to a fortunate Profligate, or to a sense-
 less Fop, who make a Noise and Figure in
 the World upon the Credit and Acquisitions
 that the Virtues, or perhaps the Crimes, of
 their Ancestors have left them! But alas!
 notwithstanding all the fine Compliments
 the *Letter* makes our Age, for standing so P. 14.
 well affected to that Universal Remedy, the
 Ridicule; it must be confess'd, that the
 Follies and Extravagancies, the ridiculous
 Impostures we just now observ'd, are so
 far privileg'd, as to be not only exempted P. 15.
 from Criticism, but even flatter'd with the
 highest Art. For Men do still keep their
 Titles and Properties, which are nothing
 else but Peculiar Customs and National Opi-
 nions, and whilst these are set apart, there
 can be no impartial and free Censure of
 Manners;

P. 15. *Manners*; We have the *Letter-writer's* word for it. So that in truth our *Liberty* does not *run* far enough; there are such things as Law and Honor, as well as Conscience, which restrain a brave Man from carving out to himself the Fortune that he deserves!

P. 49. For had we all the *Liberty* that by the Principles and Witty Arguings of the *Letter* we may pretend to, the *Examining* of a Rich Man with *Freedom and Familiarity*;
 P. 51. an endeavour to put him *not only in ordinary good Humour, but in the best of Humours, in the sweetest, kindest Disposition of his Life*; in that Temper which is *surely the Height of Goodness, and which the Letter calls Divine*; which consists not barely in *wishing that others shou'd partake with him*, but in actually supplying the Necessities of a *part of Mankind*; such a generous attempt to
 P. 66. make him *learn Goodness*, when perhaps he was but little dispos'd to't, cou'd never be thought worthy of so Tragical an Exit, as many a Gallant Fellow is forc'd to make at
 P. 67. *Tyburn*. Those *Delusions*, which take with Judge and Jury, merely because they *come arm'd into Court with the specious Pretext of Moral Certainty, and Matter of Fact*, ought no longer to be heeded, now the *Letter* has discover'd such *Impostures*, and laid down a better Rule! For unless my Lord ***'s *Enthusiastic Friend* is much mistaken, a Man upon the Road may dare to treat his Betters

freely, even tho' they shou'd be Men of highest Power among us; and be sure they will not be displeas'd with this liberty; provided he does but treat them with good Manners, such as our Writer has shewn to Religion. And all the Reason in the World, at least so much as the Letter affords, that they shou'd take this Freedom kindly: Because they will be doubly Gainers by this Goodness P. 64.
of theirs, if not in Money, yet in somewhat better, even in the Love and Praise of P. 65.
him, who does not in this Case give them ignorant Commendation, and forc'd Applause, but who has acquir'd a competent Apprehension, as having by his own Senses found out something that was really good. For the more P. 37.
they are search'd into, and familiarly examin'd, the more their Worth, that is, their Wealth; which is now-a-days the only Merit, appears; and the Discoverer, charm'd with his success, esteems and loves more than ever!

HAVING thus apply'd the *Rule of Ridicule* P. 18, 19.
to Civil Matters, and seen how admirably well it bears; pass we on to those of the Camp, which probably our Letter-writer may allow to be, without peradventure, P. 17.
very grave and weighty in their own Nature. For he who shoots his Arrows against Heaven, does it no hurt, they only return upon his own Head. But Generals, however Powerful, Wise, and Fortunate, not being Almighty, must keep up their Reputation

P. 61.

P. 15.

as well as their Troops. 'Tis a tender String, not to be touch'd tho' ever so gently; and he who shou'd go about to Ridicule and Expose a Victorious Commander, wou'd, I doubt not, catch a *Tartar*, as he well deserves. And yet *there is an odd way of Reasoning very Sovereign* and very Powerful in some important Cases, which wou'd almost persuade us that Life is not a *serious* thing, nor Death a *grave* business. It does in fact prevail with Thousands; or else what shou'd we do for Soldiers? And how cou'd such a multitude of Men, if they were in their Senses, expose themselves for Sixpence a Day? The extreme *good Humor* of my Lord ***'s Correspondent may, it's like, dispose him to conclude, that this is one of those *National Customs*, which *Jealousie of State*, to the great detriment of the Public, *exempts* from the *Freedom of Censure*, tho' his great Modesty won't allow him to say so. And certainly it were better for poor Fellows to be suffer'd to die with their Thoughts about them, than to be fillipt into another World in Wrath, in Drink, and in a Hurry; Or if there is no other World, be permitted to live as long as they can in this. The Triumphs of a Conqueror, 'tis true, make a glare in most Men's Eyes, and Power is a delicious Morfel; yet after all that can be said for't, this way of deciding Quarrels by the Sword, must be acknowledg'd not a little Brutish. And if Ruin and Destruction

were

were all, a Plague, a Famine, or an Earthquake, wou'd excel the greatest Warrior, as being able to destroy more Speedily and more Effectually. It is the Prudence and good Conduct, the Generous Actions that a General has opportunity of shewing, which brings him in his true Glory: These make him really Great and Triumphant, whatever his Success may be. Tho' as I remember, we have heard, or *read in History*, of People who value nothing but Success, Huzza the Victorious, tho' their good Fortune is owing to Chance or Folly; and damn the Unfortunate, tho' made so by mere Accidents, which no Humane Foresight or Prudence cou'd prevent: And of a Senate not much Wiser, who vote their Thanks, and give their Plaudits one Day, and are for examining the Merits of the Action the next!

DOUBTLESS our *Letter-writer* wou'd deserve the Thanks of Mankind, cou'd he laugh this boisterous method of making War out of Countenance, and prevail with the Powers of *Europe*, at least, to decide their Differences by the *Ridicule*. What an entertaining Sight wou'd it be to see two Armies drawn up in *Battalia*, throwing Jest and Repartees at one another, instead of murdering Bullets! And how much more Humane, as well as Gallant, for a Body of Men, to conquer their Enemies by their distinguished Wit, than by Brutal Force, in

P. 32.

which many Beasts are superior to Man-kind. The *Golden Age* would then return, tho' no *Inquisition*, or *formal Court of Judicature* were set up to forbid it. And besides the many Lives that wou'd be spar'd, and wholly spent in Mirth and Good Humour, abundance of Money wou'd be sav'd for the better Expence of Operas and Entertainments, more sutable to the Mildness of Humane Nature than Ghastly Wounds. And, which is yet more considerable, every Party assembled for Diversion, might then produce a General, expert and famous in the Art of Victory. Whereas in the present robust Contentions, to the very great Prejudice of that Equality which ought to be preserv'd among a *Free People*, a Nation affords but One, and an Age not many more.

See Letter
p. 23. and
Campagne
in Valen-
cia, p. 216.

THAT *extraordinary Thoughts*, which can be no other than Witty ones, are as necessary in the Camp as in other Places, we have a *bright and glaring Evidence* in the *Campagne of Valencia*, all our Successes in Spain two or three Years ago, being owing to such *Thoughts*, and to the *diligent Execution* of them. The Noble General who commanded at that time, not inferior to *Pan* himself in the Art of War, *finding means to strike a Terror thro' an Host of Enemies*, 7000 Men, *by the help of so small a Company as 1200!* It was without doubt a real *Pannic* that seiz'd the *French* and *Spaniards*, and made them

them raise the Siege of *St. Mattheo*. For tho' *Pannics* have been perverted to other purposes, their first Invention and Original Design was purely Military; as our Ingenious *Letter-Writer* has prov'd past all Dispute. Happy for us that our Enemies with all their Superstition understood nothing of the *Pannic*, for had they been aware of its *Imposture* and stood their Ground, we had not only lost all our Hopes on that side, but which wou'd have been infinitely more worthy to be regreted, all the Wonders of the ensuing Campagne, so fruitful of Illustrious Precedents to future Ages. And that Heroic General might have *perish'd* without the Honour due to *a Man deserving a better* lb. p. 234. Fate: Like *Abner* have fallen a Sacrifice to Poltrons, who ought to have understood the Laws of Chivalry better, than to attack a brave Man at such great Disadvantage.

To depend entirely on one's own Conduct, and Happy Invention, without any Dependence *on other People*, or on Fortune, lb. p. 278. that is, as I take it on Providence; for what else can Fortune mean when distinguish'd from *other People*? This is the Perfection of Wit. And that Superior Genius, that reach of *Thought*, which cou'd maintain its ground *against the Forces of the Enemy*; *against Orders from Court*; *against Unanimous* lb. p. 229. and REASONABLE *Opinions of a Council of War*, tho' it may have a very *Romantick Air*, even in the Opinion of its own Histo-

Letter

P. 17, 18,

rian, is doubtless Really Grave, and therefore can never be too much honor'd and rever'd, because it will stand the Test of Ridicule, or whatever Test you shall please to try it by! Whence it is evident, that the Art of War was never brought to its utmost Perfection till the *Campagne in Valencia*. For to Conquer by Force of Arms is a vulgar way, neither so Heroic nor so Humane, as to do it by Dint of Wit. To look so far into Mens Hearts, to judge so truly of their Fidelity (if a Spy can pretend to any) as well as of their Capacity, and of Men's Love to their Families, which generally gives place to the Love of themselves; and not to be deceiv'd nor disappointed in that Multitude of Spies and Intelligencers that were employ'd, speaks a Sagacity more than Humane! Nor cou'd it enter into the Head of any but a Man of Wit, to raise a Siege with 1200 Men, when the Besiegers were almost six times the Number; to pursue a well appointed Army of *between 2000 and 3000 Horse, and about 4000 Foot*, with less than 200 Dragoons upon Horses that cou'd hardly go, and to drive them twenty Leagues before him! and with a small Party of those Dragoons to ride up to the Gates of a Fortify'd Town under the Shot of all their Muskets, and so to fascinate both the good Priests and a thousand of the Towns-People well Arm'd, that they shou'd not be able to stay six Minutes to consider of the Matter,

Campagne,
&c. p. 223.

Ib. p. 236.

P. 238.

P. 239.

or to see how well the General was attended; or whether there was any Appearance of the *Artillery* and *Miners* he threatned them with! A General of such uncommon Thoughts must needs be Victorious, for he will always find his Enemies surpriz'd, Unprovided and Defenceless. Whereas your mere Soldier, tho' ever so good a General P. 263. Officer, may manage his Matters with a great deal of *Dexterity*, and very much like an Officer, but it will be all to little purpose if he encounters with a Wit. The Die will certainly be turn'd upon him; he will fall into the *Ridicule* of Believing and Confiding in his Enemy, of rendring himself suspected to his Friends, and doing the very thing that he contriv'd to avoid!

IF the *Liberty* we have now taken seem Letter to run too far, and we be said to make an P. 15. ill use of it, in being thus free with our Superiors, they must give me leave to ask in the words of my Lord ***'s Friend, who shall be the Judge? What Bounds were formerly set to Wit, we shall see presently; for in our Father's Days, excessive and unrestrain'd Liberty might perhaps be call'd Licentiousness. Wit has of late Decreed that there can be no such thing; that *Ridicule* shall be boundless; that unless by not using, 'tis impossible to abuse Wit; that its Privileges and Prerogatives are whatever it shall Declare to be so; or rather, they shall be reserv'd in *petto*, to be produc'd and exem-

plify'd as Occasion serves. So that a Wit,
Drawcansir like,

*He Writes, he Huffs, he Struts, Looks big,
and Stares,
And all this he can Do, because he Dares.*

P. 29. For who shall judge for a Man in matter
of Wit? Introduce *Uniformity of Opinion?*
P. 31. *A hopeful Project! The only way to save
Men's Sense, or to preserve Wit at all in the
World, as no small Master in the Trade as-
sures us, is to give Liberty to Wit. Now Wit
can never have its Liberty, where the Free-
dom of Raillery is taken away. If we fear
to apply this Rule in ANY THING, what
Security can we have against the Imposture of
Formality in ALL THINGS. Let but
the Search go freely on, apply this Test Uni-
versally, and the right Measure will soon be
found: And when every thing is represent-
ed as Ridiculous, nothing will be so.*

Letter
P. 19.

P. 16.

P. 52.

P. 53.

'Tis certain, for look into the *Letter*
and you'll find it *Demonstrated*, that unless
the Reverend Bench of Judges, and our
Rulers in Civil and in Military Posts, can
purge themselves of *Malice*, and clearly
prove that they are truly and perfectly Good,
according to the *Notion* so wisely settled in
the *Letter*, they are not to be reputed Jud-
ges, or Governors, but Tyrants and Op-
pressors. *What Vertue in assuming an Opi-
nion contrary to the Appearance of things, in
resolving*

resolving to hear nothing that can be said against it ? In presuming Men are Wise, Just and Good, merely because they are in Place and Power, and before we have apply'd the P. 19.
Ridicule to them, to see whether it will bear or no ? To suppose them Good, without bringing them to the Infallible Test of Ri- P. 17.
dicule, is to give up our preliminary Right of P. 19.
Judgment, and to allow our selves to be most Ridiculous. And when we are affraid to use P. 52.
our Reason freely, even on that very Question, we then actually presume them Bad, and flatly contradict that pretended Character of Goodness, whilst we discover this Mistrust of their Temper, and fear their Anger and Resentment, in the Case of this Freedom of Enquiry. To make a Merit of saying all the P. 53.
Good we can of them, at the very stretch of our Reason, and sometimes quite beyond it, is no better than flattering and even mocking them.

ON the other side, *we can never use too* P. 49.
much Good Humor, nor examine any Thing or Person with too much Freedom and Familiarity. For if they be Sincere and Genuine, they will not only stand the Proof, but thrive and gain Advantage from hence : If they be Spurious or mixt with any Imposture, they will be detected and expos'd. And since no Man cares to be deceiv'd himself, why shou'd he desire to Impose on others ? Imposture is perhaps for his turn to Day, it may be in the opposite Interest to Morrow.

Letter
P. 36.
P. 45.
P. 46.

If his Principles and Actions are such as need not fear the Light, if his *Humor* is of the *Right Temper*, he will only shine the more for being expos'd. Nor ought he to think it a Disrespect or lessening of his Character, to be spoke of with *Freedom and Pleasantness*, to be treated after a *Bart'lemy Fair Method*, and to see People *take a Fancy to act Puppet-Shews in his Contempt*. For what Privilege can a Mortal, be he ever so Good and Great pretend, to exempt him from that Usage which is offer'd to Religion, to the Apostles and all Holy Saints and Martyrs, nay even to the GOD and Saviour of Mankind, and this in a Christian, a Protestant, and a very Godly, Zealous Nation !

✱ 17.

BUT hold——'tis allow'd that No *Ridicule can lie against Reason*, nor consequently against Religion, if it is Rational. And one wou'd think the Christian Religion has been so fully and so often prov'd to be high-

* The H. Mr. Boyle, my Lord Chief Justice Hales, Sir Charles Wofely, Sir Peter King, Mr. Nelson, &c.

ly Reasonable, not only by the Clergy, but by the * Laity also, that a Man must have an Assurance beyond that of a Common

Jester or Buffoon, to suppose that it is not so. *How then can any one of the least Justness of Thought endure a Ridicule so wrong plac'd? Nothing is more Ridiculous than this it self.* And if Men Reason so ill as to laugh in the wrong Place, 'tis Reason still must teach them to do better. Reason then is Judge of Wit;

P. 16.

and

and Religion, which is only Improv'd Reason, is a Privileg'd Subject, not to be touch'd by Raillery. We are *sure* that it is *Really* P. 18.
Grave, and of the highest Importance; as sure as we can be of our own Existence. And if you wonder, Reader, that having undertaken the Subject of Wit, a mere *Bar-* P. 33, 34.
tlemy Fair Business, I shou'd at any time forget my self so far as to grow serious; I must own to you, that it is not thro' Chance merely that it has thus happen'd. To say Truth, being extremely desirous to preserve Wit in the World, so much of it I mean as is good for any thing, I wou'd not quite discard Reason, and become a Monkey instead of a Man. For unless Mankind have been mistaken from the beginning of the World, Reason is a *Grave*, *Serious*, or if you will a *Formal* Thing: It is all of a Piece, and has often but one way to go when it follows Truth. A Mathematical Demonstration with a Jest in it, wou'd be a New, and Happy Invention. And because the Authority of Philosophers and Witty Men, may go farther than the most solid Reasonings with our Writers of Letters and Men of their Stamp, tho' Divine Authority be of Small Reputation with them; let us see what has formerly been the Opinion of Famous Men concerning Wit, and the Use of Raillery in Religion.

Time was when neither *Country* nor *City* Preface to
Mouse, nor *Mice* of an higher Denominati- Hind and
Panther
on Transvers'd.

on, were at all *Ambitious of Laughing at any Persuasion, or making Religion the Subject of their Trifles*. There may indeed be Modern as well as Antient Metamorphoses. A Reader in a Church, was heretofore chang'd into an Emperor, and then into a declar'd Apostate. And why may not a Mathematical Demonstration be Transvers'd into Prophecy? Poets Transpos'd into Peers? Patriots and grave Politicians be Translated into Buffoons? And a *Little Mouse* be Transform'd into a *Great Man*? This may be for ought one knows, for Times and Men are changeable. Only *Truth* is still the same; *it is the most powerful thing in the World*, even by the Confession of its Adversaries. Whatever our *manner of Conception may be*, whether Things appear *Weighty or Ridiculous in our Imaginations*, this makes no Alteration in the Things themselves; their Nature is not chang'd by any Thoughts of ours concerning them. Whence we may conclude, That since, in the Memory of most of us, it was Wit, as well as *good Sense*, to ask *What Relation has a Hind to our Saviour?* And *what Notion have we of a Panther's Bible?* For the same Reason, What has a *Puppet-show* to do with Religion? And what Frenzy is it to propose a *Bart'lemy Fair Method* of trying it? If it is *absurd in Comedies*, to make a *Peasant talk in the Strain of a Hero*, or a *Country Wench use the Language of the Court*, how *Monstrous and Unnatural* is it, which

Letter
P. 7.

Preface to
H. & P.
Transv.

which weighs more with some People than its being Profane and Impious, to bring in *Apollo* and the *Muses*, the *Nymphs* and the *Fairies*, *Bart'lemy Fair*, and a *Puppet-show*, when we speak of the True GOD and his Worship! And setting aside the Blasphemy, it is infinitely more Foolish and Absurd, to represent him like our selves, or rather under a Character which a Man of any Spirit wou'd despise, without Understanding, without Justice, or Sense of Honor, than it is to make a *Priest of a Hind*, and a *Parson of a Panther*. Nor is it less Preposterous and Ridiculous, to speak of Sacred, August, and Great, and for this Reason *privileg'd Subjects*, in certain little, and unbecoming Modes of Speech, than it is to go to Court in Trunk Hose and Farthingales, or to approach the Presence in the Habit of a *Harlequin*.

SOME notable Authors of our Nation, who ^{Letter} are as fit as any Men to manage a *Public* ^{P. 26, 27.} *Leading* in this Case, give us such a pretty account of Wit, that one can no more forbear being fond of it than of Mischief and Madness. In the Opinion of the Great Mr. Lock, *Wit lies quite on the other side of* ^{Essay, B. 2.} *Judgment*; and consists in something that is ^{C. 11. §. 2.} *not perfectly conformable to Truth and Reason*.

And another ingenious Writer tells us, *That* ^{Of Education, C. 11.} *Wit chiefly considers Appearances, takes them for Reality, puts one thing instead of another, with like Dexterity as a Jugler does his Balls. That Witty Men are Irresolute, Inconstant,*

constant, Unfortunate, commonly unfit for Business, and their Wit failing before they arrive at Old Age, they become flat and contemptible. If Wit be join'd with Power, it is in his Opinion, very dangerous to the Public; all Mischiefs in Commonwealths proceeding from these Wits; for Wise Men will not disturb Governments, and Fools cannot. They whose Wit does not carry them so far, obtain the noble Titles of Facetious Companions, Good Drolls, Men who make us Merry: And the best Place to fix them in is a Tavern or a Coffee-House; until their Brains growing Hot they proceed to Enthusiasm, call upon the Nymphs and Muses (the very Language of our Letter-Writer) and so proceed to take their Degrees in Bedlam-College. Excellent account of Wit! What Man of Quality, Education, and Fortune, would not be fond of such a Character, such a Fate! Good Sense is a mere Ass to Wit; Reason a Grave, Formal Business, which may serve some of the Purposes of Life, but can't make us half so merry as a Smithfield Booth!

Preface to
the Hind
and Panther
Trans-
vers'd.

We know who said, and upon what occasion, That the best Things are capable of being turn'd into Ridicule, that Homer has been Burlesqu'd, and Virgil Travestied, without suffering any thing in their Reputation from that Buffoonry. No more will any other Grave and Serious Author when wrested from his true Sense; and least of all the Sacred Truths of Religion. Even the great

Professor of Ridicule allows, that *we can* Letter to my L.***, p. 18.
never be too Grave, if we can but be sure
that we are really so; and we can never
too much honor or revere any thing for
Grave, if we are sure the Thing is Grave, as
we apprehend it.

THE main Point, then, is to know always
true Gravity from the false; and so great is
his Humanity, that he will not allow Man-
kind to have hitherto had the Wit to distin-
guish them; or to know the Yorkshire Breed
of Racers, from the Bart'lemy Fair Hobby-
Horses! But has not one Reason to think
that Man's Head is oddly turn'd, and to sus-
pect his Brains, as well as his Faith and Mo-
rals, who has so little Judgment as to ima-
gine, that Subjects, which Mankind in gene-
ral, and especially the Polite and Ingenious
part, have hitherto treated with the highest
Respect and Veneration, are all of a sudden to
be laught out of the World by a little pert
Raillery? Nothing but a strong Inclination well p. 8, 9.
improv'd, and the being wonderfully happy in a
Faculty of deceiving himself, whenever he sets
heartily about it; an Understanding as de-
prav'd as his Will, and a Taste as vicious as
his Appetites; can make such Witticisms re-
lish, I need not say with a Man of Religion
and Virtue, but even of Breeding and Com-
mon Sense. A Writer so brisk out of Sea-
son; whose Design and Management are so
contrary to the End and Use of real Wit;
who Judges so Ill as to pretend to excite
 Mirth

P. 17.

P. 16.

Mirth and good Humor, by that which naturally strikes us with Horror and Detestation ; such a Writer whenever we can prevail with our selves to lay our just Indignation aside, *naturally falls into Ridicule. Nothing can be more Ridiculous than he himself who has laid his Ridicule against Reason, and the Giver of it. Such an Unnatural Humor cannot hold, but the Ridicule so ill plac'd at first, will fall at last where it deserves.*

Essay on
Translated
Verse.

WANT of Decency, Decency of any sort, is want of Sense, in the Judgment of an incomparable Poet, and Judicious Critic, my Lord Roscomon : Nor does Impiety, any more than *Immodesty admit of Defence*, tho' it be ever so much set forth,

With *Pompous Nonsense*, and a *bellowing Sound*:

The very Character of the *Letter-writer's* Style. Colouring is the least of the Matter, both in Wit and Painting ; a few bold Strokes never made an Artist ; the Attitudes, Proportions, and above all the Design, shew the Masterly Genius. He who Paints or Writes *beneath Life*, is more abject and mean, but not less unnatural than he who stretches *beyond* it. Nothing can be Wit that is not Sense ; nor Sense unless to the Purpose : Nor wou'd any Man utter an indecent Jest, which inasmuch as it is Indecent is therefore Silly, but thro' a Consciousness of his want of Genius, and that he has not Wit to do better.

THIS was formerly the *English Taste*, that
it

it is alter'd is certain, but I fear not for the better, that Men of Quality and Sense can relish such *Letters* as that *to my Lord* * * *. I don't say, that Quality and Sense always meet; or that real Honor and Title do constantly go together. They ought to do so, but we often see, that the Man of Figure does the Base and Mean, and the Person of No-Figure the Brave and Honorable Action. And if he can't shame his Superiors into better Manners, by the Decent, yet home Reproof of a Good Example, he will at least be above the Infection of their Bad one. But the Mischief that Buffoons and little Writers do, is indeed to be imputed to the Countenance and Support of their Betters, whose Breath inspires and moves these Puppets; and who, as is to be fear'd, act behind the Scene, and are the Apes that put the Cat's Paws into the Fire, that is too hot for their own Fingers.

ANTIENLY the *Fools*, that is the *Wits* of those Times, deny'd Providence and Blaphem'd GOD, in *their Hearts* only. They secretly wish'd there were no GOD, because their Corrupt and Abominable Works, expos'd them to his Justice. But they had not the *bonne Assurance* to call that Justice MALICE, to speak out their Wishes *freely*, and to put the *Question whether He really be, or not*. The making War with Heaven, is a Bravery reserv'd for our Glorious Days of Liberty and Reformation! Days, which a
F
certain

certain Antient Author has been so free as to call *Perilous Times*; and has describ'd the Men of these *last Days*, by all those lovely Characters with our Fine Gentlemen are so fond of. For not to insist on their being *Covetous, Boasters, Proud, Blasphemers, Disobedient, Unthankful, Unholy, without Natural Affections, breakers of their Word, and most solemn Covenants, false Accusers, Incontinent, Fierce, Despisers of those that are Good*; we shall only take notice of them by their being *lovers of their own selves*, without regard to others. Very passionate and judicious Lovers indeed! who for the sake of their dear Selves (as they suppose) are *lovers of Pleasures more than lovers of GOD*. Lovers of those luscious, cleanly and lasting Pleasures, which it may be will endure to the end of their Lives, that long, long Period! and it may be not, as it happens, and as their Pleasures, Constitutions and Doctors can agree. Most of them not *having* so much as *a Form of Godliness*, proclaim their Sin as *Sodom*; and those who have the Form *denying the Power thereof*. *Ever learning, pretending to Reason, Wit, and great Discoveries*; and yet *never able*, because not willing, *to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*. Their *Corrupt Minds*, being the real Cause of their having *no Judgment concerning the Faith*.

THEIR Prompters are indeed grown above the little Arts of those who write *Letters to*

Ladys,

Ladys, who creep into Houses, and with their *Tales of a Tub*, lead captive silly Women. Silly, not through want of Natural Sense and Understanding, but by reason of their being laden with Sin, and led away with divers Lusts. The Address is now openly made to the Great Men, the Men, as P. 37. 'tis said, of highest Power among us, of Sense P. 17. and Breeding, of a more than ordinary Genius, whose Sublime of Reason, Power of Eloquence, and Height of Goodness, make them P. 12. P. 38. be so much adber'd to, and belov'd. And how are they receiv'd by my Lord *** , and the rest of those noblest Actors, and of P. 12. the noblest Part assign'd to any Mortal on this Earthly Stage, when they are acting for Liberty and Mankind, of which themselves, doubtless, are the most considerable part! How are they receiv'd? Why, not amiss to be sure, since the great Patrons, as well as the little Enthusiastic Friends, inspir'd by P. ult. their imagin'd Presence, have altogether broken the Yoke, and burst the Bonds, the foolish Bonds, as they suppose, of Conscience and Honour!

THIS is the good Manners with which some Men treat Religion; and the Wonder is the less, if they are new Men: For remembering by what ways and means they open'd the Door to Preferment, 'tis like they may think fit to maintain their Power and Grandeur by the same method. Our Antient English Peerage were of another strain;

they were not more remarkable for their Loyalty to their Prince, than their Piety to their GOD. They subdu'd themselves, as well as their Enemies. Their Health was not consum'd in Debauchery, nor were their Estates squander'd in Vanity, Gaming and Luxury; but Generously bestow'd in Charity, Hospitality and Liberality. Real Merit only obtain'd their Friendship; and whatever a Man's Outward Circumstances might be, if his Mind was great enough to emulate and follow, much more if it was able to set a Pattern of the most Generous, Virtuous and Noble Actions, he was duly qualify'd for their Esteem and Kindness. To be their Friend, was to be entitled to a Real Honour; and therefore to be sure, their Friendships were far, very far from being a Confederacy in Wickedness, or a Snare to Honesty. They despis'd a Man who wou'd forsake his own Reason, and blindly follow other Men's; who wou'd violate his Conscience to make his Fortune, or save his Estate; and who had either no Principles, or such as wou'd conform to every Fashion. And whilst our Nobility maintain'd this true Grandeur, their Elevation became them; none presum'd to Envy, what all Rever'd. It was consider'd as due to their Virtue, and as a very considerable Benefit to their Inferiors, in that it gave Light for their Direction, and afforded them Encouragement and Protection

in

in Well-doing. For Men of Quality did not study to distinguish themselves by Supercilious Distances and little Affectations; but by the shining Glories of a Superior Merit. They shone by their own Brightness, without being oblig'd to any external Advantages for their Lustre. Their Greatness was such as cou'd not be taken from them; it was even and conspicuous, in all the Revolutions of Fortune's Wheel.

It is to be hop'd that some of this Antient Race do still remain, whose *good Manners* are as different from that of the other, as their Blood. Who esteem Religion worthy of the utmost Respect, and the highest Veneration; not only as it is a complete System of the most excellent Laws, and most Beneficial to Mankind; but chiefly by reason of the Divine Authority of the Lawgiver. For surely no Deference can be great enough to be shewn towards the Maker and Governor of All Things; no Obedience, no Submission too much. The most consummate Wisdom is to Believe what He Teaches, and the only sure way to Happiness is to Do what He Commands. For Infinite Wisdom cannot Err, and Infinite Goodness will neither Deceive nor Disappoint us. And one has reason to think that those, who *treat Religion* with this sort of *good Manners*, are not Inferior either in Quality or Understanding to my Lord ***, or the greatest of his Friends.

P. 30.

THE *Manners* are indeed extremely different; and if there arises a Dispute about the *Right Measure*, who shall be Judge? Shall *Magistracy* vouchsafe to interpose? By no means, it has so ill a hand, if you'll believe the *Letter-writer*, as to spoil every thing it attempts to settle. And Men of his way care as little for Government as they do for Religion, both being a Restraint to that Licentiousness which they miscall *Liberty*. But here again arises another Question, and that is, whether Magistracy is not under an Obligation to interpose? It is generally believ'd that *David* acted like a Wise and Prudent Governor, as well as like a Holy and Virtuous Man, when he resolv'd to banish all Impious, Profane and Wicked Persons from his Court and Councils, and to root out all Wicked doers from the Land in which he Reign'd. For if the Magistrate derives his Power from GOD, as some affirm, he may be thought to bear the Sword in vain, if through Fear or Favour, he neglects to draw it in Vindication of his Master's Honour: If from the People, as others hold, he does but ill consult their Safety, that *Supreme Law*, who suffers the Foundations to be cast down, and does not, as much as in him lies, avert the just Vengeance of the Almighty.

PARDON me, I am not setting forth on any sort of *Errantry*, nor so foolish as to fancy I can Reform the Age: It thinks it
self

self too Wise already, to be made Wiser by such an unfashionable Writer. Not but that Mankind are ready enough to learn any Vice or Folly; and those Humble Good Souls! who don't glory in Invention, whose Pride is not turn'd that way, are at least content to conform to the Fashion. They honor Wisdom and Virtue, they give the Preference to, and delight in these, if you will believe them. But, sensible of their own Weakness, they dare not oppose a Torrent. What! venture to be Laugh'd at, tho' in the Cause of Religion and Virtue! or in any Case, unless in pursuit of a Darling Folly of our own! Can it be a fault to be Modest and Reserv'd in Piety and Well-doing; since it is so great a Crime to be Bold and Audacious in Wickedness! Custom, and the way of the World, prevail over all our good Purposes. We mean exceeding well, it is impossible to have better Wishes and Desires, nobler Designs; but alas! the Crowd and Hurry of Business and Ceremony, and now and then a little Sloth due to our Rank, and Time to Breathe in, and divert our selves, renders them all ineffectual. Hereafter we hope to be more confirm'd in Virtue; the Vogue may turn to Piety's side, and then none shou'd be more glad to Follow, tho' we want Confidence to Lead. For the only Party that a Man's asham'd to be at the Head of, is that whose Piety is Real and Sincere. The Hypocritical Pre-

tence is indeed too frequently put on, and too often successful. Thus the World continues, as it was, or rather grows worse and worse, being still complain'd of, yet unamended. Birds of Prey take their flight to devour, and are not deter'd through a fear of *Singularity*: But the Geese follow one another. And be assur'd, *Reader*, that unless you have other Advantages, besides a good Understanding, and an honest, resolute Heart, you and I shall leave Mankind just as we found them. Courage however, 'tis a noble Attempt to be Public Benefactors, in rescuing Humane Nature from the most ignominious Slavery, by spiriting it up to a Sense of its Original Dignity; how little soever the Benefaction is understood, or how much soever undervalu'd. And tho' we lose our Labor for the present, a Day will come when we shall find our Reward.

P. 23.

"WE read in History, says the *Letter*, " that *Pan*, when he accompany'd *Bacchus* " in an Expedition to the *Indies*, found " means to strike a Terror through an Host " of Enemies, by the help of a small Com- " pany, whose Clamors he manag'd to good " advantage." And we may see in our own Age, a small Company, Votaries to *Bacchus*, and such like Deities, who in hopes of being distinguish'd for something or other, (as *Erostratus* of old) put in Practice that same *Stratagem*. And by their loud *Clamours*, and Industry, and Laughter, manag'd to good
advantage

advantage among some ecchoing Machines, whose Skulls are empty, and their Front of Proof; Engines who resemble Men in every thing, except in the want, the inconsiderable want! of Reason and Religion; have so far prevail'd, as to fright the generality of Mankind from a Generous Exertion of themselves, their Abilities, Authority and Power, in a becoming Zeal for their Maker's Honor, and for the Vindication of Religion, — shall I say—? or even of Humane Nature it self, from the Indignities that Monsters bring upon it. I pray GOD that it be not laid to their Charge; and that the Woe denounc'd against faint Hearts and feeble Hands may not overtake them.

FOR that a Christian shou'd be zealous in rescuing Souls from the Error of their ways, is *no wonder*; it is indeed to be wonder'd how he dares neglect it, considering that the Love of GOD, and of his Neighbour, are the Principles by which he acts. But one wou'd think that Libertines, of all Men, shou'd be unconcern'd in making Profelytes; since they expect no future Reward for their Labor, and to succeed in it wou'd be only to spoil their present Market. For the Happiness of a Christian consisting in the Enjoyment of an Infinite Good, may be communicated to every one, there is no interfering in the Possession of it, nor any occasion of Envy or Quarrel, but he who advances his Neighbour's Felicity, does very
confide-

considerably increase his own. Whereas Libertine Pleasures depending on limited and precarious Objects, which are often out of our Power, and which must be engross'd, and many times destroy'd, are continual occasions of Solicitude, Disquiet and Grief; so that the Pain they give is generally greater than the Delight. As is sufficiently prov'd, by the insatiable desire of Variety; it being very certain, that if the present Entertainment satisfy'd, or were equal to a Man's Wishes, he wou'd not disgust it and seek a Change. Which is just such a Relief as changing Posture is to a sick Person, it a little amuses the Man, but does not cure the Distemper. To proselyte Men to Libertinism is therefore highly impolitic; because the *plain honest Morals* of a Libertine, are of a-piece with his Creed: This reaches no farther than he can see, and the other scarce so far as you can see him; to impose on you to your Face being indeed most dextrous, and for this Reason a greater Proof, and nobler Exercise of Wit. So that to make Libertines, is to make so many Beasts of Prey, Foxes and other Vermin; and to do all one can to reduce Mankind to a state of open Violence, or dissembled Malice, which some, taking the *Measure* from themselves, have falsely call'd a State of Nature. And how can the Teachers of such worthy Opinions be sure, that they shall not be out-done by the Strength or Cunning of their Disciples? THE

Letter,
p. 63.

T
Disco
rous
are, a
SUR
be br
fords
knows
them
them
never
tom,
them
Like
and c
they c
ing th
the M
and P
over-d
Humor
timatio
wou'd
Cou
is no C
to trust
larger
the Sk
Grave,
wou'd
All th
when
mace t

THE *Letter* has oblig'd us with a clear Discovery of the Mystery of this preposterous Zeal. His *good People* the Libertines P. 62. are, as he owns, very far from being ASSUR'D. Tho' the Path they tread in may be broad, yet being dark and boggy, it affords no firm footing. Their *Reason*, which P. 56. *knows the Cheat* they wou'd fain put upon themselves and others, fails not to remind them of it in their *cooler Hours*, and *will never rest thoroughly satisfy'd on such a bottom, but turns them oft a-drift, and tosses them on a Sea of Doubts and Perplexities.* Like Children in the dark, they are afraid, and cry out to draw as great a Crowd as they can about them. And notwithstanding the good Face they strive to set upon the Matter, are not able to conceal the Fears and Pangs they feel at Heart. Their very over-doing of that *Cheerfulness and Good Humor* they pretend to, being a shrewd Intimation of that Uneasiness which they fain wou'd hide.

COU'D they but be ASSUR'D that there is no GOD, that *they have only mere Chance* P. 62. *to trust to*; and are no more than a sort of larger *Puppets*, which being worn out, and the *Show* over, shall be thrown into the Grave, and there's an End of them, they wou'd doubtless *be much easier in their Minds.* All their Arguings against Religion, and when these fail, that Buffoonry and Grimace they shew in contempt of it, being on-

ly

- ly to stifle and allay their Fears. Even my Lord***'s *Enthusiastic Friend* himself stands some *Adventures with Religion*; as is plain from several *Symptoms* which he, *poor Gentleman!* unhappily labors under. For Truth, which is the most Powerful thing in the World, having compell'd him to confess, that it is impossible that any but an *Ill-natur'd Man* can wish against the Being of a GOD: For this is wishing against the Public, and even against ones private Good too, if rightly understood; and that the Notion of a Mind, a common Parent, is most comfortable; in a line or two he will only have the Notion to be *less frightful*, than that of *forlorn Nature*, and a *fatherless World*. Frightful then it is to him, who hereby shews himself to be one of those *Ill-natur'd Men*, as they are call'd, p. 54. *who have such Ill-will as to stifle their Belief of a Deity*: Or, if you will, one of those *Good People*, as he terms them in another place, (p. 62. no matter for the Contradiction) who *wou'd have less fear in being expos'd, to mere Chance and forlorn Nature*, than in living under the Care and Protection of a *Common Parent, a Universal Mind*, which is *truly and perfectly Good!*
- P. 71. P. 7. P. 54. P. 62. P. 54. P. 52.

Now how cou'd this be, were they conscious of behaving themselves towards Him as Dutiful Children? How cou'd any Man of Sense take Sanctuary in *Chance, forlorn Nature, a World that has neither Sense nor Meaning in it*, and where *Affairs all run at Adventures,*

P. 36.

Adve
Scrup
sition
jects,
tius
whic
they
from
since
Men
eradi
GOD
fectly
to Hi
Malic
mony
cou'd
on, if
rest.
are fo
reason
of our
needs
fectly
highel
of his
alone
is not
cessant
that H
of us
to be
Laws,

Adventures, were it not for the *Doubts* and *Scruples* arising from that *wondrous Dispo-* P. 76.
sition in Mankind towards Supernatural Ob-
jects, which, as the *Letter* confesses, *Lucre-*
tius himself *was forc'd tacitly to allow*; and
 which, notwithstanding all their *endeavours*,
 they can't *get rid of the Thoughts of*; and
 from *these Idea's*, which cannot be *vain*,
 since they are in a manner *Innate, or such as*
Men are really born to, which will not be
 eradicated, and which convince them that
 GOD must be perfectly Just, as well as per-
 fectly Good; and that they are obnoxious
 to His Justice, which they impiously miscall P. 61.
Malice? For the Divine Nature is the Har-
 mony and Sum of all Perfection; GOD
 cou'd not possess One Attribute in Perfecti-
 on, if He did not perfectly possess all the
 rest. Which are in Him but One, tho' we
 are forc'd to consider them separately, by
 reason of the Limitation and Imperfection
 of our Nature. His Goodness therefore must
 needs be perfectly Just, and His Justice per-
 fectly Good. And His having annexed the
 highest Sanctions to His Laws, is an effect
 of his abundant Goodness. For since GOD
 alone is able to make us Happy, and that it
 is not possible to obtain that Felicity we in-
 cessantly desire, by any other method than
 that He has appointed; and since the most
 of us have not Sense and Ingenuity enough
 to be charm'd by the Excellency of His
 Laws, what can be more for our Interest,
 than

than that the Terror of Punishment should excite us to Consider them, till at last we be overcome by their intrinsic Worth and Goodness?

WHAT then are these *Adventures* Men *stand with Religion*? What Hazards and Difficulties does it expose them to? Just as much as the *Compass* and *Chart* do the Mariner in a long and dangerous Voyage. If he will be such a Sot, as to neglect the use of them, or to despise and reject them, to hoist up his Sail, and run a-drift as Wind and Tide shall carry him; if he snores or debauches away his Time in the Cabin, when he should be steering his Vessel to the Port, who shall pity him, tho' he bulges on the Rocks, or founders? and not conclude that his *Distraction* is as deserv'd, as it is inevitable! An Irreligious Man is indeed by many degrees a much greater Fool, than they would be who should venture to Sea ignorant of, or Infidels in, the Art of Navigation. For not to take notice that a Man, who finds more Pain than Pleasure in Life, may be glad to be rid of it; whereas every Man unavoidably desires to be Happy so long as he has a Being; not to insist on the infinite disproportion between making one's Fortune for a short Life, and for an everlasting One: Besides all this, a Man can't be sure of a successful Voyage, let him take ever so much Precaution, and be ever so Careful and Industrious; but he may be sure of attaining

the H
uses l
Relig
Work
future
preter
CO
of tha
that C
this
large
a mere
covered
gone a
many
courage
Solicita
small In
Faith
Tonings
System.
might k
World,
or Evid
Queen
rather
for this
umbus
purpose
label li
s it h
return
Majestic
the

the Haven of Everlasting Happiness, if he uses but the same Application in Matters of Religion, that all prudent Men do in their Worldly Affairs. Or if there shou'd be no future Happiness, which is what Libertines pretend, he comes off at least as well as they.

COLUMBUS had not the thousandth part of that Evidence for another Hemisphere, that Christians have for another Life after this. And had he not pass'd for a Man of large Faith, one who *believ'd to the utmost*, P. 56. a mere *Enthusiastic*, Credulous Fool, the Discoverer of such immense Treasures, had not gone a begging from Court to Court for so many Years, laugh'd at by many, and encourag'd by none. Indeed after five Years Solicitation, their Catholic Majesties, by a *small Inclination well improv'd, extended their* P. 9. *Faith so largely*, as to take Columbus's Reasonings and Probable Conjectures for a *solid System*. They *believ'd at a venture what* P. 53. *might have been the greatest Falshood in the* P. 54. *World, for any thing he cou'd bring as a Proof or Evidence to the contrary*. And the wise Queen *Isabel* was ready to pawn her Jewels rather than her Hero shou'd not be equip'd for this new sort of *Errantry*. Thus Columbus was set forth, and as it prov'd to some purpose, a World-hunting. *Ferdinand* and *Isabel* listen'd to his *Beggarly Arguments*, and as it happen'd got the Mines of *Potosi*, in return to their Credulity. Happy for their Majesties, as well as for *Columbus*, that he was

P. 11.

was Crown'd with Success, or else those Great Princes had sunk in their Character; their *strong Act of Faith*, wou'd never have stood the *Test of Ridicule*, but every little Writer, in the witty Ages that succeeded, wou'd have play'd his Jest^s unmercifully upon them.

P. 56.

It can't be deny'd that this is a shrewd Instance on Faith's side; it puts quite out of Countenance our Cautious, Witty People, who will believe no farther than they see, and who turn every thing that suits not with their Humor into Ridicule. It shews that Incredulity does not always turn to account; and that a want of Faith may sometimes be very prejudicial to a Man's Interest even in this World. For whether or no *Columbus* his *Reason* was thoroughly satisfy'd on the bottom he went on, is more than one knows. But as Story informs us, his mutinous Crew were far from being satisfy'd, infomuch that he was forc'd to put the Cheat upon them in his Reckoning. And without question he was often turn'd a-drift, toss'd on a Sea of Doubts and Perplexities, as well as on the Ocean: Until his large Faith, as it happen'd, was rewarded with the sight of *San Salvador*, and other agreeable Discoveries. As a good Christian, who by his great Credulity, exposes himself to the Winds and Waves of this troublesome World, not very obliging to those who look beyond it, may happen to be driven into the Haven

of Et
speaka
them
AN
Search
Measu
this T
infalli
better
arm'd
tainty,
of, tha
parably
have o
of the
in the
Wit, e
the oth
Obscur
tury, f
portanc
Princes
were w
Hint on
Case, b
suaded
spun Pl
also do
Errors
are we
Greedy
slip the
fres, fo

of Eternal Rest, and to Inherit those unspeakable Joys which GOD has prepar'd for them that Love Him.

AND yet, now I think on't, *let but the* P. 16.
Search go freely on, in order to find the Right Measure of every thing, and for ought one knows this Tale of *Columbus*, when brought to the infallible *Test of Ridicule*, will be found no better than one of *those Delusions which come* P. 67.
arm'd with the specious Pretext of Moral Certainty, and Matter of Fact. This I am sure of, that the Business of Religion, is incomparably better attested than any Accounts we have of *America*. There is abundantly more of the Air of Imposture and a *Tale of a Tub* in the latter, than Libertines with all their Wit, even to Licentiousness, can ascribe to the other. For can it be imagin'd that a Mean, Obscure Person, so late as the Fifteenth Century, shou'd Discover Places of so great Importance and Vast Extent, which all the Great Princes and Wise Men among the Antients were wholly ignorant of, having left us no Hint or Footsteps of their Knowledge in this Case, but many that they were firmly persuaded of the Contrary? The *Plain home-* P. 66.
spun Philosophy of looking into our selves, may also do us wond'rous Service, in rectifying our Errors about this pretended Discovery. For are we not all of us Thirsty after Fame, and Greedy of Gold, how came we then to let slip the means of gratifying both these Desires, for so many Ages? And as a finishing
 G Stroke,

- P. 51. Stroke, we need only put our selves in the best of Humors, and in the sweetest, kindest Disposition of our Lives, that good Humor which is necessary to understand well what true Goodness is, and then we shall find, that
- P. 57. to love the Public, to study Universal Good, and to promote the Interest of the whole World, as far as is in our Power, is surely the height of Goodness, and makes that Temper which we call Divine; and having thus settled with our selves, the Notion of what is morally excellent, Reason will tell us, that it is not consistent with
- P. 60. the Goodness of Nature, which has no Malice, to suffer such Rich and Delicious Countries to be conceal'd from us; and our Arts and Sciences, our Polite way of Living, and all the Improvements we of this Hemisphere have made, to be unknown to the other.
- P. 61. A Universal Being can have no Interest opposite; and therefore can have no Malice: And if there be a general Mind, it can have no particular Interest. This is Demonstration! And so good-night to Columbus and all his fine Discoveries, which under the Notion of Matter of Fact, and being too grave to be freely examin'd, have so long impos'd upon Mankind, by a sort of Enthusiasm of second hand. For Men are so wonderfully happy in
- P. 67. a Faculty of deceiving themselves, that when they find no Commotions in themselves, no Panic that bewitches 'em, they are apt still, by the Testimony of others, to be impos'd on, and
- P. 8. P. 67.

led
thin
I
Bod
be a
Stor
and
trary
Peop
Iron
wher
wou
bribe
liz'd
Age,
and
from
and
pleas
they
but a
better
postur
Gold
desig
in the
apply
tily R
indee
call th
an In
know
for th

led Credulously into the Belief of many false things !

I never saw *Peru*, nor ever spoke with any Body who has been there, shou'd not I then *be a great Volunteer in Faith*, did I credit the P. 10. Stories that are told of so strange a Place, and People whose Manners are so very contrary to Mankind's on this side the Globe? People who for Beads, and Glafs, and Rusty Iron, barter'd away their Precious Gold ; whereas there's scarce a Man among us, who wou'd not part with his Honor, his Soul, bribe him but high enough with that Idoliz'd Treasure ! The *cunning* Traders of the Age, 'tis true, shew one a glittering Metal and other fine things which they say come from thence ; and by the *help of Education* P. 11. *and a Good-Will into the Bargain*, I may if I please, *work my self up into a Belief* of what they say. Tho' there may be nothing in it but a *National Opinion*, and it may prove no P. 15. better than the mere Invention of some *Imposture* of an Alchymist, who lives by this Gold-Craft, and by imposing on honest, undesigning People, who thro' their Ignorance in the *Test of Ridicule*, or want of Ability to P. 17. apply it, can neither *sharply inspect*, nor *wit-* P. 14. *tily Ridicule* the Cheat. The Gold is brought indeed to that which they who Trade in it call the Touchstone : But is not this as much an Invention and Trick as the other? Who knows but that the Touchstone may be made for the Metal, and the Metal for it, to carry

on the Imposture the better? Wou'd it not then be the height of Madness, to quit an easy Fortune and pleasant way of Living, or even a tolerable one, and to go in search of this Fairy Treasure, thro' Winds and Waves and all the Dangers of the Seas; to be expos'd to Heat and Cold, Hunger and Thirst, and innumerable Fatigues, to ravenous Beasts, and the Treachery and Barbarity of more Brutal Men! The King of the Country has never, as I cou'd hear, done us the Honor to send Ambassadors, much less his Son to invite us thither, to shew us the way and assist us in our Voyage: Nor has he assur'd us of a good Reception. There are pretended Charts of the Country and the way of sailing to it, I grant, but they are Imperfect, and perhaps contradictory. Our so much boasted Needle which was to be our Infallible Guide, varies unaccountably, and Later Voyagers oppose what was deliver'd as Oracles of Truth by Former. Few are agreed in their Accounts, nor has any Man who pretended he had been there, ever made Profession of so strong a Faith, as to endure all sorts of Miseries and Torments, even to the Loss of Life it self, in spreading the Belief of this Golden Region.

BUT suppose there shou'd Really be such a Country, may not we live as well without any Commerce with it? Our Forefathers did so. The Happy, or as we call it, the Golden Age, was before the Discovery of any
 3 such

such
the
Tra
of t
tha
this
one
has
cy f
this
tray
very
GO
Fait
sty,
to th
B
for C
Grea
conv
or Sy
lation
ble I
Brea
Blaz
ever
and t
Were
with
valu
for th
our B
Tin a

such Metal as Gold. Gold, which has been the *Occasion* of all, or most of those dismal *Tragedies* that have been *acted in the World*; P. 49. of that *Bloodshed*, those *Wars* and *Devastations*, that have render'd Life so *Tragical*. It is this *Unnatural Thirst* after Gold, which yet one can neither Eat nor Drink, and which has no other Value than what a deluded Fancy sets upon't; it is the rapacious Desire of this, which makes a Man abandon and betray his Master, his Patron, his Friend, his very Creator; sell his Country, and deny his GOD; and in spite of Gratitude and Honor, Faith and Conscience, or even Moral Honesty, deliver himself up, by way of Auction, to the highest Bidder.

BUT were it not that this *Pannic Passion* for Gold is *rais'd in the Multitude*, in the P. 24. Great as well as in the Little Vulgar, and convey'd by *Aspect*, or as it were by *Contact*, or *Sympathy*; that the very *Breath and Exhalations of Men are Infectious*; that *innumerable Eyes glow with the Passion*, and *heaving Breasts are labouring with Desire*; that the *Blaze arises so of a sudden*; and that where-ever you go the *Fury flies from Face to Face*; and the *Disease is no sooner seen than caught*: Were it not that every body almost is seiz'd with this *Ridiculous Enthusiastic Frenzy* of valuing every thing Rare and far-fetch'd, even for this only Reason; were it not for this, our *English Product*, our *Bristol Stones*, our *Tin and Copper*, wou'd be altogether as va-

luable, and wou'd answer all the Uses we can put them to as well as the Gold and Silver, the Diamonds and Gems, of the *Indies*.

- P. 62. WE may assure our selves that Nature has no Malice. Nothing but Ill-Humor either Natural or Forc'd, can bring a Man to think amiss of her. The more we search into and familiarly examine her, we shall be the more convinc'd, that she is the most inoffensive, harmless, sweetest, compassionate, good-natur'd, best sort of a Gentlewoman, that any one can settle with himself a Notion of. She is the farthest in the World from Stateliness and Moroseness, or any thing that may make us uneasy. From Provocation or Offence, Anger, Revenge, Jealousie in point of Honor, or Power, Love of Fame, Glory, and the like, which belong only to limited Beings and are necessarily excluded in a Being Universal. She's never out of Humor, good Lady! if at any time Folks happen not to hit her Title, or whatever Indignitys and Affronts they put upon her. Shou'd twenty Beggars croud about her Coach, or when she walks abroad *incognito* treat her with no better Address than *Forsooth* or even *Goody*, 'tis the same to her as if they shou'd say with all imaginable Respect, *Good Your Ladyship*, or *Good Your Grace*, she wou'd be altogether as Generous in the one Case as in the other. For she can have no Particular Interest: The General Good, or Good of the Whole, and her own Private Good must needs be one and the same. And therefore
- P. 37. P. 60. P. 37. P. 55. P. 61, 62.

fore
but
appl
fion
and
Foo
no
real
ties,
have
mad
Ear
inde
by t
Ear
most
B
our
Nec
is w
the
pose
Man
disbe
are f
cou'd
age,
to th
Chan
be fo
Cour
perfe
stron

fore it follows, by no *odd way of Reasoning*, but *such as is very Sovereign to those who can apply it in certain Distempers of Mind*, occasion'd by an unnatural Appetite after Gold and Jewels, that these glittering Trifles which Fools and Enthusiasts so much admire, are no better than Trumpery. For were they really Good, they wou'd not be such Rarities, our Indulgent Mother Nature, wou'd have bestow'd them on all her Children, made them as Common and Universal, as Earth and Air, Sun and Water. She seems indeed rather to think them hurtful to us, by the Care she takes to hide them in the Earth, and to put them out of the reach of most People.

BUT to wind up our Bottom, and dismiss our *American Theme*. We are under no Necessity of believing *Antipodes*; the World is wiser now than to condemn either side of the Question as Heretical. However, I suppose he wou'd hardly pass either for a Wise Man, or a Wit, who shou'd in good earnest disbelieve, or make any doubt, that there are such People. And tho' most Men, it's like, cou'd they be SURE of a prosperous Voyage, and of enriching themselves according to their Heart's desire, wou'd submit to the Charge and Fatigue of one; yet there may be some so well provided for in their own Country, so free from Covetousness, and so perfectly Content, as to find no Motive strong enough to prevail with them to be-

P. 34.

come Adventurers. The Case is otherwise as to Religion ; for all who live in *Christendom*, must of necessity *stand* some *Adventures* with it, whether they will or no. We can't avoid Hearing of it, and unless a Man be a Fool, a Sot, or out of his Wits, he must needs consider it, 'tis of such mighty Consequence to every one. Upon Consideration it will appear to him True, or False; there is no Medium. Death is unavoidable, and if Religion be True, he must of necessity be for ever Happy, or for ever Miserable after Death. He can't tell whether it be True or False, till he has carefully and judiciously Examined it, and weigh'd the Arguments on both sides : Not slightly and in a hurry, but with such Calmness, Deliberation and Impartiality as is futable to the Importance of the Matter; that so he may be Clearly Convinc'd, Fully Persuaded, and Firmly ASSUR'D, and remain without Doubt, or Hesitancy, whatever side of the Question he takes. This is no more than ordinary Prudence requires; he who neglects it, has little pretence to Common Sense, much less to any *Sublime of Reason*, or to *Wit*, if it be valuable, and unless it be a Contradiction to Reason and a Sound Understanding. Till this is done a Man can't so much as enjoy his Pleasures : A Fool or a Madman may, but it is scarce possible for one of tolerable Sense, who has not quite lost it in Inconsideration, to relish them, so long as he

is not SURE that he shall not be call'd to an After-Reckoning.

AND this is so much the more necessary, as the *Letter* is in the Right when it tells us, that it will contribute little to a Man's *Satisfacti-* P. 56,
on in this World, or Advantage in another, to believe to the utmost; because if after all there be nothing in the Matter, there will be no harm in being thus deceiv'd; but if there be anything, it will be fatal not to have believ'd to the full. Bare Belief will do us little Service, as is allow'd on all Hands; we must have Reason, tho' not for the Mode or Manner of every Article of Faith, yet for the Truth of the Thing, and as the Ground and Motive of our Belief. We must be well ASSUR'D, and know what we trust to, and in whom we have Believ'd, or else we shall never Believe to any purpose. But tho' it be very true that a Faith which has no better Foundation than what the *Let-* P. 56,
ter assigns it, is an insignificant Thing, yet that which he wou'd insinuate as the Reason of its being so, is apparently False, and Ridiculous enough. *Our Reason*, says he, KNOWS *the Cheat*. The Cheat of what I pray? Of that which Religion Teaches? If so, 'tis absurd to talk of being *tofs'd in a Sea of Doubts and Perplexities*; for Knowledge is an Anchor that secures us from running *a-drift*. And if our Writer KNOWS that there is no GOD, either by Intuition, or Demonstration, or perhaps for that a Man of his Sagacity may have pry'd into every Corner of the Universe, and
 can

can neither hear nor see any Footsteps of a Deity, such an one as the Christian Religion requires us to believe in, he has made a new and very great Discovery, for the Proof of which the World will be oblig'd to him! But till he condescends to Prove it, we must ask his Pardon for *Reason's* KNOWING any thing of a *Cheat* in the Christian Faith.

P. 55.

P. 57.

NOT much better is his other Reason, why that Belief he mentions will do no Good: For tho' that *beggarly Refuge*, as he calls it, is allow'd to arise from an *injurious Thought* of GOD, yet to think that GOD requires Belief, is not that injurious Thought, as the *Letter* wou'd suggest. But the unworthy *Thought*, which is prejudicial to us in the Case of such a Faith as was spoke of above, is the supposing, or acting as if we did suppose, that there is no Necessity of an exact Disquisition of the Truth of that Religion which is propos'd to us in the Name of GOD and by His Authority; which is to treat it worse than we do a common History, or Narrative; for if these are made by a Person of any Credit, no Man pretends to Contradict or Ridicule them until upon sufficient Examination he finds Reason to do so. Add to all this, that a Belief taken up out of mere Necessity and Fear, without considering and weighing the rational Grounds on which Religion stands, will never produce the genuine Effects of True Faith, even Universal Holiness, without which our *Belief*, tho' it be to

the

the Utmost will do us no manner of Service.

ONE may be confident, that none who understand either themselves or their Religion, ever laid that down for a Maxim, which the *Letter-writer* palms upon his *Able Men*, p. 56. It will indeed hold true, notwithstanding his Jest or his Arguments, that no Man in his Wits wou'd risque a very great Danger, or Loss, in a mere Bravado, for nothing, or for that which is so trifling as to be little better than nothing. To be sure, no Wise Man, nor even one who has but a moderate share of Mother Wit, unless he be *deliver'd* from the common Sentiments of Humane Nature, *at so sad a Cost as Inconsiderateness or Madness*, P. 34. will hazard the Loss of Everlasting Happiness, and the suffering of Everlasting Misery, for any the greatest Advantage the World can offer him; or which can possibly be enjoy'd in a Life that must have an End: I need not say so short a Period as ours, for even Myriads of Ages are nothing to Eternity, they will not bear a Comparison.

BUT nothing can be more Ridiculous and Absurd, to say nothing of the Impiety, than the Talk of Witty Men about Religion; they shew very plainly that they speak of what they do not understand. Not but that it is exceeding intelligible in it self, and the only Reason why Men know so little of it, is because they will not apply their Thoughts to the Study of it, nor themselves to the Practice. Nor is this peculiar to Religion, for even the
Ma-

Mathematics as Demonstrable as they are, will be no better than Jargon to him who is not season'd with their Rudiments; and if he shall presume to discourse of them before he has study'd them, what blunders will he not commit? To hear a Man who does not deny, or wou'd not be thought to deny a GOD, speak of His August Majesty, as if the Deity were his Fellow, or scarce so much, is so far from being Wit, that it is not common Sense, 'tis the Ravings of a Bedlamite. A Wit, it seems, knows no difference between treating a Man like himself *freely*, and being Impudently and Profanely Saucy with the King of Heaven! Excellent Masters of Politeness are they, who speak of GOD with as much Contempt as one wou'd of a silly Man or Woman in a Coach, greedy of *Title*, and unable to bear the Affront of being treated beneath their Quality! Who wou'd have it thought, that the All-Wise GOD has no regard to His Honor, and will not vindicate His Just Authority; that

P. 55. He affects the *Praises* of Insignificant Mortals, because He requires their Just Acknowledgments, which the very Nature and Reason of Things make an indispensable Duty, in return to His daily and innumerable Benefits. For our Men of Wit, with all their Acuteness, know not how to find a Medium between being fond of *Praise and forc'd Applause*, and insensible of *Malicious Affronts*; between using their Reason Reverently, and

P. 65. then

then
ting
Imag
Prof
they
that
the
with
Proof
who
very
Him
W
be G
give
'tis ev
Hono
Disin
taque
tions
and I
not R
gume
ly an
whom
Hand
be a C
stance
Coffee
not P
and C
true,
whom

then as *freely* as they please, in contemplating the Divine Being, and misusing their Imagination in framing Senseless as well as Profane Conceits of His Adorable Nature! If they can prove that there is no GOD, or that GOD is such an insignificant Idol as the *Letter* describes, let them be as Merry with Him as they think fit: But till that Proof is made, it must needs appear, to all who have not lost their Understandings, the very height of Folly and Madness to treat Him irreverently.

WHETHER the Adversaries of Religion be Gentlemen or no, one knows not; they give us Reason to think they are not, since 'tis evident they do not Act like Men of any Honor, or tolerable Breeding. Nothing more Disingenuous and Unmanly than their Attacks; for to wound Religion by Insinuations and sly Suggestions, which is Calumny and Detraction; to Laugh when they cannot Reason, and turn into Ridicule the Arguments they cannot Answer; is as cowardly and foul, as to stab a Man in the Back, whom you dare not meet with Sword in Hand. But that an irreligious Man should be a Coward is no wonder; if you want Instances look on the Crouds in the Chocolate, Coffee and Gaming-Houses, who if they were not Poltrons, wou'd be serving their Queen and Country in a Camp. Impiety, it is too true, may be found even there, but among whom? Not in Men of clear Courage, but in
such

such as Fight for Pay and Plunder, who carry their Luxury along with them, and indulge it perhaps more than they can at home. Who face the Enemy only in the Strength of Imagination that their General's Good Fortune, and his Prudent Conduct will bring them off, and because they are ashamed, or affraid to Fly. And if one looks about them, 'tis like there may be found, even among our *Letter-writer's* Great Friends, some who might still have been Little Men, had it not been for the Profession of a Mighty Zeal for Religion, when occasion serv'd. Now for a Man to live by Religion, to get Wealth, Honor and Reputation by it, and to treat it as *Judas* did its Divine Author, Hail and Betray it, is so Detestable, that he must be lost to all Sense of Honor and Common Honesty, who can be guilty of so base a Practice.

BUT a Libertine is a Brute in most Cases; he does not shew so much as Common Manners to the rest of Mankind, no not to his Superiors, to Persons of the highest Rank and Power; for can there be a greater Rudeness than to treat that with Contempt and Insolence which Mankind in general Reveres? To Scoff at a Being which they Venerate? Not to name other Instances, the two Houses of Parliament, and all Persons in Office and Authority, can't decently be suppos'd to doubt either the Being of a GOD, or his taking Just Vengeance on those who Abuse and Trifle with his Name. Otherwise

what do the Oaths, which they so solemnly take signify? What Security do they give the Government? Do not the Libertine Takers of them mock Her Majesty as well as the GOD She Adores?

ONE wou'd be glad to know of these extraordinary Wits, so full of their Cavils, and Jests upon Religion, whether they ever consider'd it, as a matter of that Consequence deserves? A matter of such Importance, that whether it be a Cheat or no, it is so essential to Government, and the Peace of the World, that there can be none without it. And therefore, for the sake of their present Quiet, and the Public of which they wou'd be thought the Patrons, they wou'd do well to retire a little from the Hurry of Business and Ceremony, to get out of the Buz of Wit, and to avoid that Dissipation of Mind which is inseparable from Sensual Pleasures, that so they may *bestow some plain Thoughts*, even *serious* ones, upon Religion. Now when they have done this, let me see the Man, and he shall be my *Apollo*, who after a deliberate Enquiry and Disquisition, is SURE that the Christian Religion is an *Imposture*; SURE that after Death he shall be Nothing, or not Miserable, tho' he Lives as he lists at Present. One does not find that the boldest Libertine ever did, or can pretend, to such an Assurance. No, these *Good People* want to be so P. 62.
ASSUR'D: All their Skill lies in Objecting against other Mens Faith, they are not
able

able to establish their own Opinions; these are the poorest, most precarious, inconsistent Propositions imaginable, shifted and varied as Fancy will have it, and as they are press'd by their Opponents. For indeed a Man can no more be convinc'd that Christianity is a Cheat, than he can that the Whole is no bigger than one of its Parts; and for the same Reason, even because it is an Absurdity too great for a Libertine to swallow; let him say so, and wish it, and by some paltry Fallacies endeavour to stifle his own Convictions, and impose on the Young and Unwary, as much as he may; *Reason which knows the Cheat will never rest thoroughly satisfy'd on such a bottom, but turn him oft a-drift, and toss him on a Sea of Doubt and Perplexity.* The Ifs, and Peradventures, that in spite of all his Wit and Mirth, will in every cooler hour come a-cross him, must of necessity damp his Pleasures, sour his Humor, and spoil his Joy.

P. 56. THE Divine Goodness has indeed condescended wonderfully in adapting Religion to all Understandings. Which by the way, is no little Proof of its Divinity, for none but He who made us, cou'd accommodate Himself in such a manner to all reasonable Minds. P. 54. *An Impartial use of Reason sets us right in all Matters whatever:* It is the Abuse of Reason, a Proud, and therefore a *Mean Denial* of that Limitation and Weakness which is essential to Creatures, in Opposition to our Convictions; together with an *Affectation* of Comprehending.

hending what is too high for us, that exposes us to the most Ridiculous Follies at present, and to the dreadful Consequences of them hereafter. Your Wits are Men who pretend to be Wiser than Infinite Wisdom! to know a better and surer way to Felicity, than the Merciful Father of Mankind who made us for Happiness, in the Enjoyment of Himself, the True and Infinite Good, can prescribe them! They won't endure the least Contradiction in their own idle Schemes of any kind, yet are for *taking His Providence* P. 52. *roundly to task*; and wou'd insinuate that *all Arguments right or wrong*, are not able to *patch up Objections against it*. As if forsooth their little Politics were a competent Measure for the Depths of Infinite Wisdom! their short Views cou'd reach from one end of the Earth to the other, to say nothing of the Universe, and from the beginning of Time to the end of it! And having made themselves less than Men in the Abuse of their Liberty, they wou'd seem equal to GOD by Abusing their Understandings! *It wou'd be well for them* P. 63. (and I wish he who gives the Advice wou'd take it) *if before they pretend to ascend into the higher Regions of Divinity*, an Air too pure for Men of corrupt Minds to breathe in, they *wou'd vouchsafe to descend a little into themselves*, to measure their own Abilities, and bestow some poor Thoughts upon plain, honest Morals, upon a little Decency and good Manners. *When they had once look'd into* P. 64. *them-*

themselves, and distinguish'd between Creatures and their Creator, they wou'd probably have a juster Sense of his Divine Nature, and not audaciously approach that Abyss of Light, Phaeton like, to their own Destruction. They might then discern that their Wickedness cannot Hurt, nor their Righteousness Profit Him, and that it is only on account of the Reason and Equity of the Thing, and for their Advantage, not at all for His own, that He requires their Homage and Obedience. But whilst they judge of the Divineness of a Character by its Sutableness to their own Affections, every Man fashions his Idol like himself, a pretty way of being his own Idolator!

WHAT I pray are all the Objections that Libertines can raise against GOD, Religion, and Virtue, but the Froth of Fancy, utter'd with a Grin and Grimace, and back'd with Assurance and a Freshman's Sophistry? If you offer to Reason with a Wit, you find him a very poor, superficial Creature; who unless he is allow'd to piqueer upon Religion; to sally pertly now and then upon its Out-guards; to pun, and trifle, and Laugh where there is no Jest; has not one Word to say, but loses all his Briskness and Good Humor. Shall this pass with any Reasonable Person? Will a Man of Sense so much forget himself as to swallow it? If our Letter-writer and his Friends wou'd do any thing to purpose; if they are not Cowards in Reasoning, and mistrust their own Cause and Judgments; let them

them for once *shew themselves* Men, and not Monkeys, *bring forth their strong Reasons*, Reasons stronger than we oppose them with. For by their own Confession some Things are *really Grave*, and those that are so can never P. 18. be too much *Honor'd and Rever'd*. It will not be sufficient for them to pull down Religion, and root up its Foundations, this is but half their Work; they must vouchsafe us an entire and consistent System of something else, be it Philosophy, Wit, or Ridicule, or whatever they please to call it, where we may find a better, or at least as good an Account of all Appearances, as we do in the Christian Philosophy. Which if it does not so plainly and fully resolve all Difficulties, as some curious Men may desire, does yet answer them more clearly than any other Philosophy does or can. The Obscurity it leaves arising chiefly from the Necessary Limitation of Human Nature, and Imperfection of our present State, which will not allow us to see any otherwise than thro' a Glass darkly, as we are able to bear it. But if this is too hard a Task for our *Titans*, it is but Reasonable that such profess'd Enemies to *Imposture*, shou'd have the Wit and Ingenuity to yield to *Truth*, which they allow to be *the most powerful thing in the World*.

IF there is no GOD, be pleas'd, Gentlemen, for the sake of those who wou'd Reason like Men, as well as for the Benefit of the *Good People* who desire only to Laugh and *be at ease*, to shew us how and from whence the

World had its being? It's Eternity won't now pass upon us; Mathematics as well as Divinity, have discover'd too many Absurdities in this Supposition. Sir *Isaac Newton*, if your *Reason* is *sublime* enough to Understand him, will Demonstrate this to you, as well as any Divine, and you cannot suspect him of Priestcraft. Your Self-Moving Atoms and their lucky Jumble into such a Beautiful Form as that of the Universe, is yet more Ridiculous. Shew us then some New and Better way of Accounting for our own Being, and the Origine of the World, if you reject that of an Infinitely Perfect and Self-Existing Mind, the Maker and Governor of all Things. But be satisfy'd, that whatever it be to which you ascribe Self-Existence, unless this Eternal Mind, and something must necessarily Exist, or else not any thing cou'd be, you will not only run into all the Difficulties that you wou'd seem to avoid, but into others so great and choquing, so contrary to the Common Principles of Reason, that no Man of tolerable Judgment will be able to endure them.

WILL you ascribe Self-Existence to the first of Human Race? One wou'd then be glad to know what is now become of them? A Being whose Existence is Necessary Cannot, and certainly he who is Self-Existent will not, Annihilate himself. He who gave Being to all other Things, can neither be Unwilling nor Unable to Preserve his own. Or will you pretend that your *Nymphs* and
your

your *Fairies*, and such like Invisible Beings, are Self-Originated? Now besides, that this *in good Truth* is falling into a Solid System ^{P. 9.} of *Old Wives Stories*; there are Numberless Contradictions in allowing Self-Existence the Foundation of all other Perfections, to partial and limited Beings, or indeed to any but that One Eternal Mind, who is Infinite in all Perfection. For as to Dame *Nature*, if by that Word you design an Invisible Being, I know nothing of her, and you your selves as little, she is as very a *Fairy* as any *Muse* or *Apollo* of them all: But if by Nature you understand the Material World, and those Effects which are regularly produc'd according to certain Mechanical Laws, then you take Refuge in the World's Eternity; and I must again entreat you to be better Mathematicians than this comes to, if you will not be Good Christians.

MUTUAL Attraction or Gravitation, is one of the most Universal and Uniform Affections of Bodies; but it is not essential to Matter, any more than Motion is, both proceeding from the Will and Power of a Superior Cause. Which can't be a Material One, for that wou'd imply a Contradiction, as supposing a Matter Superior to Matter in general, and such as can give that to another which it has not in it self, nor any sufficient Power to produce. And yet this Mutual Attraction, tho' not essential to Matter, but foreign and superinduc'd by a Superior Being, is so necessary

cessary to the very Being of the Universe, in that Form in which we now behold it, or at least to our Solar System, and as far as our Observation and Reasoning can carry us; that were it once suspended, unless a Miraculous Power interpos'd, there wou'd be no more distinction among Material Beings; all wou'd crumble into Dust, and every single Atom, either remain at rest, or else proceed in strait Lines, according as its Projectile Motion happen'd to be at the withdrawing of the mutual Attraction.

WE must then allow a *Providence* as well as a Deity, one is as necessary as the other in order to the Solution of the *Phænomena* of the Universe; which can no more Subsist a moment, than it cou'd at first Be, without the Omnipotent Power and Efficacy of its Divine Cause. It is the same thing to GOD to Govern the World as to Make it; both are perform'd by the same Almighty Word. And tho' you and I, or perhaps our Betters, can't Govern a Kingdom, it may be not so much as a petty Province, or a little Town, much less the World, without intolerable Fatigue and Trouble, especially if our Subjects shou'd happen to be Atheists and Libertines, does it therefore follow that GOD cannot? A wise Conclusion indeed! and such as is suitable to the Wit of a Libertine. Besides, if Stability be a greater Perfection than a perpetual Flux and Variation, as must needs be granted; then cannot the Source of all Perfection be Matter,

ter, but Mind; which Mind, whatever it be as to its positive Nature, is not, cannot be material, any more than a Circle can be a Square, the essential Properties and Affections of the last, being not more different than those of the former. And if a Wise, Just, and Holy Goodness, be better than a tame and careless Easiness, which I think no Man in his Senses will deny; such ~~Easiness~~ ^{an} easiness being on all hands *acknowledg'd* to be a *Defect*, a *Meanness* and *Imperfection*; then cannot the great Lord and Governor of all Things, whose Knowledge and Power are Infinite as Himself, remain an idle Spectator of the Wickedness of the Sons of Men, nor forbear to make a Distinction sooner or later, between the Righteous and the Wicked, the Holy and the Profane.

P. 63.

BUT Experience shews, that for the most part all things come alike to all in this present Life; there is one Event to the Good and to the Sinner; which cou'd not be suffer'd, I need not say by the Divine Justice, but even by Equity and Goodness, were the things of this Life of any great Consideration, and were there not a Reward hereafter for the Righteous; a GOD who in His own due time will Judge the Earth in Righteousness, and render to all Men according to their Works. Eternal Life, Glory, Honor and Peace, to those Generous Souls, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek, and prepare themselves for, a Happy Immortality: But to

them who are Contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, and in a word, upon every Soul of Man who continues Impenitent in Evil-doing, Indignation and Wrath, Anguish and Tribulation. Which cannot but be Equitable, since it is their Choice, the natural Fruit, and the necessary Effect of their own Doings. GOD can as well not Be, as not be Just; as must be allow'd by every one who has any tolerable and consistent Notion of the Divine Nature. Therefore since Justice has not its Effect at Present, it must infallibly have it Hereafter. Nor will the Goodness of GOD, which the *Letter* wou'd oppose to His Justice, bring off our Writer and his Friends: For since the Divine Majesty wants neither Wisdom to discern what is fit, nor Power to perform whatever pleaseth Him, it is not possible that He shou'd suffer His Faithful and Obedient Subjects, whose Study and Business is to do His Will in all things, to share the same Fate, or, as to things without, most commonly a harder than is allotted to the Disobedient and Rebellious, to such as despise and revile Him.

P. 36. Now having gain'd so far upon the Libertine, as to force him to confess a GOD, a Providence, and a Future State, if he has any Rational Principles, any Consistent Notions; and unless he is so *Ill-humor'd*, so far out of conceit with Affairs, as to imagine that they run at Adventures; and that the World, as
wise

wise a Face as it carries, has neither Sense nor Meaning in it; if he is capable of *Deliberation*, and not one of those who are *all Air and* P. 34.
Humor, which, as his Friend explains it, is being *Inconsiderate and Mad*: Having brought him thus far, it will be to little purpose to deny Divine Revelation. The former Truths sufficiently control his Lusts, for the sake of which he disputes the Gospel; and wou'd, if he were able, get rid of his Natural Notions of GOD, and a future Retribution. A Man who has but common Prudence, who has not exchang'd it for *Inconsiderateness and Mad-ness*; who does not keep himself drunk with Wine or Passion; at all times full of Worldly Business, or intoxicated with Sensual Pleasures, without ever a *cool hour*, or any leisure to use his Reason, cannot but be solicitous what will become of him after Death. Any Light into a future State, any Instructions how to demean himself, in order to secure a fair Fortune to Eternity, cannot but be highly desirable: And therefore to a Man of Sense, Divine Revelation must above all other Knowledge be most acceptable. Both because of the great Excellency of the Truths it reveals, his own Interest in them, and the important Consequences attending them: As also because of the Certainty and firm Assurance, that the Infallibility and Veracity of the Divine Teacher gives, setting us beyond all hesitation or doubt, when we are once assur'd that the Revelation does indeed come from
GOD.

GOD. Which assurance is not hard to be obtain'd by any Man who will honestly endeavour it; there being much better proof that the Bible is the Word of GOD, than there is of any Fact or Thing whatever. So that if we disbelieve it, we ought, by the same Reasoning, to disbelieve every thing that we did not See or Hear. Our *Thucydides*, our *Livys*, our *Virgils* and *Horaces*, and other Profane Writings, may with much more Reason be condemn'd as Forgeries, than any of the Sacred Books. And what can become a wise Man's Study, what Principles, Maxims, or Truths can command his Esteem and Reverence like these! It must needs be the height of Stupidity and Folly, to contemn or neglect so invaluable a Treasure as the Oracles of Divine Truth. Nor can they who do so, pretend to be good Protestants, and Enemies to Popery; the Reformation being founded upon a profound Deference to, and Veneration for the Holy Scripture.

IN a word, unless Wit and Reason are as Inconsistent as they are Different; unless Good Sense and *Justness of Thought*, are not *the finer and truer Wit* that takes with our *Letter-writer's Men of Sense and Breeding*, but that they prefer insipid and ridiculous Raillery, and the airy Fancies of a roving Imagination, before the most Rational and Solid Account of Things, they must allow Christianity to be that *Sublime Reason*, that
Test

Test of Truth, which they foolishly ascribe elsewhere: And give us leave to desire them for their own sakes, to fix upon some Principles or other, that will give a better Solution of the Riddles of Nature and Providence, or at least as good an one as the Christian Philosophy does, e're they pretend to Ridicule and Reject it. For to Laugh our selves out of the little Knowledge we have, will be so far from being *Wit* and *good Humor*, that it will be the height of Folly and Madness. And a Fool's Cap, or a Dark Room, will in this Case be fitter for us than *Business* and *Affairs*, and the Polite Entertainments of Ingenious Minds.

PARDON me, *Reader*, if I have said no more upon this Subject than has been better said by others; Old Answers are sufficient Replies to Old Cavils, which are brought upon the Stage again and again, without any notice taken of the Defeats given them, and without the addition of any Force or Strength of Argument, unless a Scoff, or new turn of Expression will pass for it. 'Twill be time enough to surprize them with new Thoughts, when they shall be pleas'd to Honor us with new Objections. In the mean while, one can't but acknowledge their Wit, whatever becomes of their Ingenuity, in taking no notice of the Foils they have receiv'd, in waving the Combat that is too much for them, or entering the Field with unlawful Weapons. Such is their *Ridicule*; which, unless in Self-defence,

defence, or in defence of what ought to be Dearer than one's Self, a Man of Honor does not care to meddle with, lest he be like unto them.

P. 17. 'Tis true indeed, that a good Christian, though he may not think fit to be always Laughing, and knows better things than to lay his *Ridicule where it will not bear*, has in reality a Chearfuller Heart than the gayest Libertine of 'em all; and *good Humor* becomes him much better. He is fill'd with that Rational Pleasure, that Solid Joy, that Peace and Satisfaction of Mind, which raises him above, and inclines him to despise the mean trifling of Wit and Raillery. For if any thing can, Religion will make us Good Humor'd; in that it subdues those Passions which imbitter Life; sets us above those little Designs, which make us angry with them who stand in our way; fills our Souls with the Noblest Hopes, and the most Regular Desires. It keeps our Minds in a good state of Health, and generally our Bodies, since they are not given up to Sloth, Luxury and Debauchery; for which reason we are in a Natural, and therefore Easie Condition, enjoying all the genuine Delights of Humane Nature. And above all, Religion keeps us in the *best Humor*, inasmuch as it gives us a Reasonable and Firm Reliance on the All-wise and Powerful Disposer of all Things, who will chuse much better for us, than we can for our selves. For what can we wish for
more,

more, than the Patronage and Never-failing, Favor, I may say Friendship, of the King of Heaven?

THE *Letter*, tho' wide enough of Truth in its other Suggestions, is in the Right in this, that *Ill-humor* does by no means suit with Religion. I will not say how far Sickness and Ill-usage may sowre People's Blood, nor what Influence a Melancholy Constitution may have upon them; and GOD forbid that none of this Complexion shou'd be capable of being Religious: But this one may say, that it is not owing to a Man's Religion, but to his want of it, that he is at any time Censorious, Spiteful and Revengeful; Impatient, Discontented and Turbulent; that he disturbs either his Neighbour or himself with any uneasie Passion; or is so Unmerciful, Unkind and Selfish, as to suffer any one to be in want of that Relief which he is able to give them. Religion will even correct his Melancholy, Spleen, and Natural Moroseness. For he neither knows the Spirit of Religion, nor what Spirit he himself is of, if he pretends to it, so long as he indulges any one of these. And setting aside some few, very few Instances and Exceptions, were I to account for Spleen and Vapors, the reigning Distempers of our Age, I shou'd ascribe them rather to a Moral than Physical Cause.

A Libertine, tho' he endeavours ever so much to put the Evil Day far from him, will now and then be surpriz'd with a *cooler Hour*; and

and then no Wonder, and no Pity, that he is unmercifully vex'd with the Spleen. A Man who has some Sense of Religion, and yet never forbore to take his fill of all the Pleasures he had a fancy to; who hopes to be an admirable Christian when he grows Old, when he has feather'd his Nest, tho' by Cheating or Rapine, or other Evil Arts, which he expects, the way of the World shou'd Authorise and Answer for; Such a Man will never be out of the Spleen and Vapors. The *Fingers upon the Wall* will be ever in his view, troubling his Thoughts, changing his Countenance, and making his Knees smite one against another, in the midst of all his Jollitys, and forbidden Actions. His Alms, which 'tis like he may afford, out of the great Estate his Knavery has gain'd him; or out of what his Ancestors may have left him, and with it a little Good-Nature and Compassion when a miserable Object is laid in his way; yet will not these Alms deliver him from the bitter Reproaches he suffers from his own Mind, for his Injustice, Impurity, and other Vices. Neither Mercy to the Poor, nor any other Commutation Virtue, will afford him Tranquillity of Mind, much less deliver him from everlasting Death, unless he breaks off his Sins by Universal Holiness, and does not allow himself to break GOD's Commandments in any one Point whatever. The *Letter* might therefore well enough question, *whether any thing besides*

Ill-humor can be the Cause of Atheism. For this *Ill-humor* arising from Pangs of Conscience, is the true Reason of all the vain Efforts that are made to be an Unbeliever. Which no Man can be to his purpose, unless at the *sad Cost* of *Inconsiderateness, or Madness*, as the *Letter* as good as acknowledges. And let him be as Thoughtless, as he can, till he is downright Mad, he will always find it true, that *the Wicked are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, whose Waters cast up Mire and Dirt. There is no Peace saith my GOD to the Wicked.*

IN not much better Condition is every Man, who dares not endeavour what in him lies, to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards GOD and towards Men. If he is convinc'd that Gluttony, and Drunkenness, and Riotous Living in any kind, are Criminal Excesses, and yet has not the Courage to despise their little Scoffs who wonder at him for not going along with them in that Excess of Riot, which is not less a Sin because it is a Fashion; if he has not Resolution enough to defend his Understanding and Liberty, from that Sottish and most Ridiculous Custom of making every Man in the Company Drink an equal Quantity, and with as good Reason they might force him to Eat it, whether or no he has Brains, or Stomach for it: I will not ensure him from the Spleen and Vapours; not only as they are Effects of his Excess, but chiefly on account

2

of

of the Reproaches his Reason will assuredly make him.

IT will be just the same with a fine Lady, who knows her own Guilt, tho' others have not, perhaps, so much as a Suspicion of it: And tho' we shou'd not suppose her guilty of Sins which are branded with Infamy. Allowing her what the World reputes a Woman's Honor and Piety, that she is sometimes seen at Church, often at the Playhouse, always punctual in her Dress and Visits to a Nicety; that Gaming is not her Trade, but only innocent Diversion, which has taught her to Understand it so well, as to be seldom excus'd from making one in a Party, either to please her self, or the Company. Let us suppose all this, yet if she brought any Good Sense into the World with her; if she being often told that whatever her Wit may be, she has no pretence to Judgment, and that the best Rule she can follow is that of the Fashion, has not fixt her in the Habit of going on in the common Road, like Horse and Mule that have no Understanding; when she has any Time of Leisure from being Busy about Nothing, the Thought will surely come *a-cross* her, whether her Ladyship or her Spaniel be the most useful and significant Creature? A Question she will no more be able to determine in her own Favor, than which of them best answers the End of their Creation? But if she has had an ill run at Play, and considers how
much

much she is like to lose in her Reputation with all Judicious Persons, as well as in her Pocket ; how much her Family suffers, and what Domestic Uneasiness and Disorders it occasions ; the harmless Wind will inevitably be accus'd, it must be in the East, whatever Point of the Compass it blows from : For why shou'd she be better instructed in this than in any other Matter ? And under so great an Indisposition, 'tis fit that half the College of Physicians be consulted, whose Prescriptions are like enough to deprive her of that Health which she knows not how to use. Not will she ever be free of the Vapors whose Time hangs upon her hands, and who is at a loss to determine to what Amusement she shall next apply her self.

Now if instead of their *Assa Fœtida*, their Wine and Frolics, their Cordial Waters, and their *Laudanum*, they will give me leave to prescribe one *serious Remedy*, I dare stand Security to all our Splenetic Enthusiasts, that they shall be perfectly cur'd of their Spleen and Vapors. And this, tho' no small Undertaking, may be done, I hope, with a little more Modesty than our *Letter-Writer* shews in standing Security to the *National Church*, which was not it seems out of Danger, notwithstanding the Old Laws and the late Declarations, till this Man of Might was pleas'd to offer his *Guarantee*. But perhaps there is a Jest in it, for he warrants her no longer than whilst *Barthlemy Fair* is in Possession of its Privileges, and much about the time that he gave his

I Security,

Security, as I remember, these Privileges were considerably lessen'd; so the Church may e'en look to her self for him!

P. 61. THE Method I wou'd prescribe as the most certain Cure for the Spleen and Vapors, is no other than that very Natural one of LIVING ACCORDING TO REASON. This is indeed the Grand *Arcanum*, the most Universal Medicine in all *Distempers of Mind*; and the only one that a Man of Sense can rely on. Now to Live according to Reason in a Christian Country, is neither more nor less than to be a Sincere Christian, and to conform one's self in all things, to what the Gospel requires. They who go on Regularly, in a Constant and Uniform Course of Piety, will find that their *Good Humor* don't depend on the Weather, or the World: Nor will they Ridiculously take Wing, and shift their Quarters, whenever the East Wind blows, as some *Good People* do; who find it, I'm afraid, but an indifferent Remedy for their Uneasiness, which they are not like to get rid of, so long as they carry their own Corrupt Minds along with them. For if Men of Piety, shou'd, upon the sinking of their Constitution, happen to feel a Vapor arise, they may be sure it will presently be dissipated, by the Light of GOD's Countenance shining brightly upon them.

BELIEVE Him, I beseech you, for He is Truth it self who says, that *His Yoke is Easy*

Easy and His Burden Light; His Service is perfect Freedom; His Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all his Paths are Peace: You need but make the Experiment to be convinc'd of this Truth. It is indeed necessary that you wear His Yoke, bear His Burden, and live in His Service if you wou'd taste the Happiness they afford. And I don't deny that Repentance is a strait Gate; the going out of Darkness into Light will be a little painful; and the Changing from a Life of Sin to one of Righteousness must have its Difficulties; But they are no more than what attend all other Changes and Initiations: And I dare say you will not find half so much Uneasiness, to be sure none of that Shame, Confusion and Regret, which it cost you to be robb'd of your Innocence. But then you must Repent to purpose, if you wou'd make Joy in Heaven, and participate in it your self. A little Holy Water, Tears, Purposes, Promises, and some partial Performances; the forsaking those Sins to which you have no longer any Appetite, nor any occasion for them or opportunity to commit them; the Practice of some Duties, such as suit with your Natural Temper and Education, or promote your Honor and Reputation; will never do the Business, nor help you to that Joy which no Man can take from you. Nothing less than the Sacrifice of your Darling, your overcoming that Sin which does most easily beset you, the utter Excision of what

seems to you as dear and useful as an Eye or a Right Hand, if it hinders you in your way to Heaven, can fill your Soul with that Serene Joy, that Perfect Tranquillity, that truly Rational, Solid, and ever entertaining Pleasure, which is more than an equivalent even in this Present Life (a hundred times more if we dare credit our Savior) to all Temporal Enjoyments put together.

It is only thro' Mens Ignorance of Religion, that they throw upon it that unjust Scandal of its being a Task, a Weariness, a Melancholy, unsupportable Burden; Whoever says so, or thinks so, was never truly Religious. Let him not content himself with being almost a Christian, nor stand on Terms with GOD Almighty, as if he was afraid of being too Wise, and too Happy; let him be true to himself, Stedfast, Immoveable, watchful that he be not led away by the Error, and Ill Example, or Scoffs of the Wicked, so as to fall from his Good Resolutions; let him but continue in all the Commandments of his GOD blameless; and he will be fully convinc'd as all other truly Good People from the beginning of the World have been, that Felicity which Humane Nature incessantly desires, is not to be found elsewhere, but is certainly obtain'd by conforming our Will to our Maker's: Which gives us such an Antepast of Happiness in our present Journey, as is a certain Earnest of our complete Enjoyment of it, in all our Capacitys, when we arrive at our Father's Court.

AND

AND therefore You Noble and Tender Plants, who by the Blessing of GOD upon a Vertuous Education, have hitherto preserv'd your Innocence from being infected with the Corruptions of this Evil World; who upon this account are the Delight and Real Glory of your Country, to which you owe so much, at least, as not to disappoint those promising Hopes it has, of your recovering the next Generation from that Sink of Vice and Profaness which this is plunged into: Let no Temptations and Allurements, no Customs of the Great, or Many, no Examples no not of your nearest Relations, no Scoffs, or Raillery, out of the Mouths of Self-condemn'd Criminals, deprive you of that most invaluable Treasure, your Innocence. To preserve it unspotted is greater than to Conquer Kingdoms, as requiring more Conduct, Watchfulness and Prudence, more Courage, Firmness and Magnanimity. It will render you worthy of the Highest Honors, and set you above all Disgraces. It will keep you in perfect Friendship with your selves, than whom you cannot have a more faithful, agreeable Friend, nor a more vexatious and dangerous Enemy. And what greater Satisfaction and Glory can a Man enjoy in this present Life, than the Approbation of his own Mind, of Wise and Good Men, and even of GOD Himself? Too many you will meet with in this evil World, who, sensible of the Loss of their own Innocence, and with it of true Felicity and Peace

of Mind, will endeavour with the Malice and Cunning of the Old Serpent whose Votaries they are, and whose Work they do, to deprive you of your Happiness. They will talk to you of Wit, Diversion and Pleasure, as if they would lead you to a very Paradise; whereas upon Trial, their Wit will be found the most egregious Folly, their Entertainments the crackling of Thorns, and their Pleasures nothing else but Diseases and Poverty, Ruin and Disgrace. The way of the World they will tell you is on their side, they persuade you to nothing but what every body does, and why shou'd you be singular? But let me entreat you to have so just a Sense of your Dignity, as to believe your selves as worthy to Give, as to Take, Example. If they have the Boldness to attacque your Vertue, shall you be so Mean as not to defend it! Especially since this will be the greatest Trial of the Grandeur of your Minds, and true Valor; For to repel Force with Force is the Courage of a Brute; but to Neglect, Despise and Overcome what is Wicked and Unreasonable, Base and Degenerous, is the Firmness and Courage of a Hero.

I allow it is not always pure Malice that sets these Instruments of Uprighteousness a-work; they have their Interest and little Designs in it. They wou'd Rook you of your Estates, Marry you to their Cast-aways, make use of your Honor and Credit in your Country to carry on their Intrigues, and De-
bauch

bauch your nearest Relations. And no way so proper to accomplish all this, as to make you Wicked like themselves. For if you suffer them to entangle you in the Snares of Sin, they have you in their Toils, and at their Mercy. You must follow where they lead, act as they direct you, with as little Regard to Honor and Reputation as to Conscience.

AND when a Man has fool'd away his Innocence, I can't promise him that his Joy, even when he returns to himself again, shall be so Constant and Even, Serenē and Pure, as he might have preserv'd it in an uninterrupted Course of Vertue and Piety. For tho' Repentance is a Remedy, which if duly apply'd, will effectually restore us to a good State of Health and Degree of Felicity, yet a sorrowful Sense of Past Iniquities becomes a Sincere Penitent, and ought always to be retain'd. However, Repentance, as harsh and bitter as it seems to be, is not without its peculiar Pleasures. There is a Sweetness in Tears, and as much ease to the Mind in Confessing its Guilt and renouncing our Transgressions, as there is to the Body in throwing off an insupportable Burden. But then, they who wou'd relish Sorrow, must be sure that it is truly Penitential; That a Sense of their Offences against GOD, not their Disappointments in the World, hath softned their Hearts, and that it is not the loss of their Beauty, but of their Vertue which makes them Grieve. *St. Peter's Sorrow* had not been

Repentance but Desperation, if instead of giving all Diligence for the future to practise every Christian Vertue, that in particular which was opposite to his Sin, he had like *Judas* added Sin to Sin. And we shou'd hardly have found *Magdalene* upon Record as an Example of Penitence to the greatest Sinners, if after she had wash'd her Face with Tears, she had foul'd it again with Paint of any kind; or had not left off all her Meretricious Arts and Ornaments when she forsook her Sins; and ceas'd to be a Coquette as well as a Strumpet, For it can hardly be suppos'd that they who are not perfectly out of Love with all retainers to their former Sins, have that real Aversion to Sin that true Repentance requires; or are angry with it upon any other Account than the Smart it has, or is like to expose them to; or that they wou'd not still go on in sinning if they durst.

P. 50.

So far is it from being a Reproach to Religion, that we have *recourse to it, chiefly in Adversity, ill Health, under Affliction, Disturbance of Mind, or Discomposure of Temper*; that nothing can be more for its Honor. What can more loudly proclaim its Divine Excellency, than that its very Adversaries are forc'd to acknowledge it to be our only Refuge, that which we may trust to, when all besides it fail, and which is therefore the strongest Support, and the most natural Pleasure of the Mind. *The Name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the Righteous flieth unto it and is safe.* If Wick-
ed

ed and Profane Men can see nothing but *Wrath and Fury, and Revenge, and Terrors in P. 50,* the Deity, who may they thank for it but themselves? I can assure them there are those who have very different Views, who in all Perplexities and Afflictions look up to GOD as their Best, their Never-failing, their All-sufficient Friend, and mighty Protector. And when worried by the *Sufferance and Anxiety* which an Unjust and Ill-natur'd, an Envious and Malicious World not seldom puts them to, they can refresh themselves in the Divine Presence, lay all their Cares and Sorrows at His Feet, and partaking of His Joys, can be not only easy and contented, but even Pleas'd and Chearful, under all the Calamities of this Mortal Life. So true is the Royal Psalmist's Observation, *Great Peace have they who love the Law of GOD, and nothing shall offend them.* And that not out of a Stoical Apathy, but a Rational Conviction, that they are under the All-wise Government, Conduct and Care of Infinite Goodness which will provide better for them than they can for themselves. The Religious Person being in reality what the *Stoics* vainly boasted of their Wise Men: Not through an insensibility of Pain. and other Inconveniencies, but by finding a Support and Pleasure that does more than Counter-balance them.

BUT what has the Profane and Vicious Man to support him in the Day of Trouble? Trouble which Mankind is born to, and there-

therefore not to be wholly avoided by the Greatest and Happiest Mortal. For supposing him free from all other Afflictions, Sickneſs and Ill Health is what he muſt ſometimes feel, and generally brings upon himſelf by his own Vices; and his Friends and Relations muſt of courſe drop off into the Grave. Tho' now I think on't, this laſt will not much affect him, for a Man of looſe Principles cares for no Body but himſelf; he is his own Centre, and values other People no farther than as Tools to his Inter-eſt and Inſtruments of his Pleaſures. He muſt however Die, and what has he to Solace him in the hour of Death? Why the Noble Hope of being Nothing, if he is able by all his Arts to conjure it up in his great Neceſſity! Annihilation! that Glorious Proſpect of the Wits and Great Men of the Age; the Crown of all their Actions; the Conſummation of all their Deſires; the utmoſt of their Wiſhes and Warmeſt Hopes! And yet *it is the moſt beggarly Refuge Imaginable*, it is what Human Nature ſo much abhors, that no Man cou'd endure the Thought of it, were he not conſcious of his own Demerit, convicted of his wilful Vileness, which renders him not only utterly unworthy of any thing better, but even juſtly liable to what is infinitely worſe. Great Minds are full of Noble Hopes, their Integrity diſpoſes them with decent, yet humble Confidence to expect a Reward. Nor can it be a diſpute which is the moſt *beggarly* Temper, their's who are

not

not only Content and Pleas'd to be Nothing after this poor, sorry Life, but who even labor all they can, in spite of Reason and their own Convictions, to Fancy they shall be so: Or their's whose large aspiring Minds, desire and hope for an unspeakably happy Eternity. For Ambition is, all the World over, allow'd to be the Character of a brave and magnanimous Spirit. The only fault is, in being Ambitious of Little Things, such as are beneath the Dignity of our Nature, which can neither deserve nor satisfy our Desires, and in pursuing our Point by such base and unworthy Methods, as a Soul truly Great can never stoop to.

IT is no Paradox, but a Truth which he will certainly subscribe to, who will give himself the Pleasure of making the Experiment, that the Life of a real Christian is abundantly more pleasant than that of a Libertine: For if there be such a thing as Human Felicity, and that it is not a vain precarious Fancy, not to be measur'd by any other Rule than every particular Person's capricious Humor; allowing only that right Reason and uncorrupted Nature, and not Opinion and Vitiated Appetites, are the Standard of Human Pleasures: It will then undeniably follow, that he is the Happiest Man who lives the most like a Man; that is, who Lives according to Reason, which is living according to Nature, to the Nature of a Man, tho' not of a Brute. Consequently tho' he may not enjoy so much Brutal Pleasure as the Libertine does

does, yet enjoying Human Pleasures, such as he was made for, he must needs be a much Happier Man. I call the Pleasures of Sensation Brutal Pleasures, in Compliance with the vulgar way of speaking, but I own it is a Question whether Beasts feel any, and one that will never be clearly decided in the Affirmative.

A Man who lives by Principle, is steady and consistent with himself, Master of his Passions, and therefore free from the Torment of opposite Inclinations and Desires impossible to be Gratify'd; always at ease in his own Mind, whatever happens without him; enjoying Self-satisfaction, which, in the Opinion of a great Philosopher, is the sweetest of all the Passions. And as such a Man is beyond all Comparison Wiser, so must he needs be Happier than the Libertine who is the Reverse of all this, always a Slave to his Appetites, and for this Reason to every Thing without him; uneasy to himself, as well as to every one who happens to stand in his way. In the Day of Adversity, from which no Affluence or Greatness can secure a Man, the *Dark hour* without will quickly and happily be over with the Good Christian who finds nothing Dark *within*, no *Fears*, no *Disturbances* in his own Breast. And supposing, against all the Reason in the World, and the clearest Proofs that any thing Future is capable of, supposing that his Hopes of a Happy Immortality shou'd prove a *Cheat*, they are however glorious Hopes,

Hopes, and as such able to support a Man, and raise his Spirits for the present, much better than Wine and Revelling, or any Libertine Pleasure can. The last unfit Men for great and generous Actions, to which the former spur them on. All the Illustrious Performances we read of, in Profane as well as in Sacred History, arising from a Hope of Immortality of some kind or other. And our modern Endeavours after Atheism, are doubtless the Cause why modern Heroes are so little of a-piece: Like *Nebuchadnezzar's* Image, Gold at one end, and Dirt at t'other; Great in some respects, and Little, despicably Little in the rest!

BUT what! attaque Heroes, arraign a whole Sinful Nation, in which, except the Head, there is hardly a Sound Part. Too much Mettle, without dispute, even for a *Bart'lemy-Fair* Writer, who shou'd, one wou'd think, stand in awe of *Indictments*, *Scandalum Magnatum*, and the like good and necessary Fences, which the Laws have provided to secure the Great and the Grave from the Insolences of their Inferiors. True, the Wisdom of our Ancestors has provided such Laws, and so has it others against Blaspheming the GOD who made us. And I shall never think myself too good to ask their Pardon, or to acknowledge their Justice, who shall call me to account for any disrespect towards themselves, provided they shew but an equal Concern for their Maker's Honor.

BUT

BUT alas! as to Daring, what a poor Attempt is mine, in comparison of the Boldness of the *Letter-writer* and his *Friends*? He who is free with the Vices of the Age, and pays not much deference to Man, who, tho' they make a greater Noise and Dust in the World, are Mortal like himself, can only run the risque of having his Reputation blasted, his Fortune ruin'd, or of being put to some Pain and Disgrace; or at the utmost have a Life that will soon be at an end, a little shortned: And yet not this neither, without His Leave, who has past His Sacred Word, that they who seek His Kingdom, sha'n't want any Necessaries in their Passage thither; that they who Honor Him, He will Honor; and that such as lose their Lives in so glorious a Cause as His Service, shall be sure of finding them to great Advantage. And what great matter is it to shew one's self Dauntless, in Confidence of being supported by Omnipotence? But to provoke the Almighty, whose Displeasure the Christian fears, and because he fears GOD, is *incapable* ~~not afraid~~ of any other ~~thing~~ ^{fear}; to brave Damnation, which most Men tremble at; this is Courage with a Witness, and the Bravery of our modern Wits and Giants! By how many degrees does it make them excel the *Grecian* and *Roman* Worthies! For to Die for one's Country, as some of these pretended, was no great Proof of their Wit, Life might have been husbanded to better purpose: But to be Damn'd to Save or Ruin it, as occasion serves, is not this Heroic?

Tis

'TIS true, Damnation is not in view, our Wits wou'd seem to believe nothing of it; upon which account a Life to them must be a greater loss than a Soul: But there are twenty things not half so formidable, which we have neither seen nor felt, and yet in common Prudence think fit to be afraid of. We shou'd hardly venture to pluck a sleeping Lion by the Beard the first time we happen'd to fall into his Company; tho' *after all*, there may p. 55.
be nothing in the matter, no harm at all in such a Freedom. He may, for ought one knows, be a Weak, or a Tame Good-Natur'd Creature, and all the frightful Stories we have heard of him no better than Fables, mere Enthusiastic Dreams! It must therefore be allow'd, that he who Dares the Almighty, gives an unparall'd Proof of his Boldness and his Judgment too! and does a bolder thing than if singly he oppos'd an Army, or encounter'd with a Mob. And indeed what can be done better, or more like Men of Rank and Figure, than to free Mankind from slavish Principles? that is, from All Principles, for they are all but so many Fetters and Restraints, which cramp us in the pursuit of great Designs, and lose us many fair opportunities of Profit and Pleasure. So long as Principles are fashionable, and there's somewhat to be got by them, whilst Bigottry to a Profession or Party raises Men's Character, and helps them to Preferment, it may be worth their while to be good Church-Men, good Protestants, good any thing, even
Papist

P. 31. *Papist* or *Mahometan*. And yet since the being ty'd to a Mask, puts too great a force on Native Liberty, it is better, much better, that no countenance be given to such *serious Extravagancies*, but rather that a universal Freedom prevailing, Men may frankly open themselves, and give the utmost *Liberty to Wit!*

To promote this Liberty, is plainly the design of the *Letter*, and its Patrons; and don't ye think that the Performance is admirably well suited to the Design? For to do the Author Justice, he has laid his Bait pretty cunningly, and has rack'd his Invention to the utmost to find out a handle for *Ridicule*. And indeed since the Libertine Cause has always suffer'd, and was like to do so in the way of solid Reasoning; since the best colouring that the finest and boldest Wits could give it, was not able to stand the Test of Reason, what so proper as to invent another much fitter for the turn, even the *Test of Ridicule*, the very Application of which to the great and awful Things of Religion, is a getting ground on it, by inuring Men to treat it with less Respect and Reverence. Libertines have doubtless a Quarrel to Reason, as well as to Religion, and upon the same account; for the one does not fail to reproach them as well as the other. Some of their Tribe have freely enough shewn their Pique to Reason; and the rest wou'd not fail to do it, if the Matter were ripe enough. The Foundation is laid in their *Declamations* against *Grave* and *Serious* Subjects,
for

for all Rational ones are such, and naturally ought to be so treated. But Gravity, say our new Instructors, *is of the very Essence of Imposture: Ridicule is with them the Rule*, and we must not fear to apply it in *ANY Thing*, if we would have Security against the Imposture of Formality in *ALL Things*. So that Reason herself must pass this Test, and stand or fall as Wit shall determine; and Men may in time be brought to value themselves upon being Ridicible, rather than Rational Creatures.

OUR Letter-writer would come off indeed, by asking *what Ridicule can lie against Reason?* which is mere Grimace in him, tho' very true in it self; as we hope our Readers are by this time convinc'd, and that his Humor, tho' it had got the start, is too unnatural to hold. But a fitter Weapon cou'd never have been put in a Libertine's hand; it is little, mean and trifling, and not at all beyond his Strength. To defend an ill Cause by way of Argument, to make Sophistry pass for Reason, and Fancy for Truth, requires no small Skill and Superiority of Genius. And among Friends, whatever Pretensions our Libertines may make to Wit, their Title to Understanding and Judgment is a very poor one. Therefore a Serious Discourse, abounding with Good Sense and Solid Reasoning, is as little fit for them as for their Cause; it would be gap'd over, and thrown aside, especially if of any length. But he who wants Brains to Argue, can laugh and shew his Teeth with a Grace,

K

which

*Hind and
Panther
Transvers'd,
p. 17.*

which in most Companies will do as well. And a short *Letter to my Lord**** (perhaps from himself) in a Modish Dress, and with an Air of Wit, will take better among the young Fellows, than all the Arguments and Demonstrations in the World. *Your knotty Reasonings, with a long Train of Majors and Minors, and the Devil and all,* (as you know who makes Bayes confess) *are too barbarous for his Style, but he can flourish better with one of his twinkling Arguments, than the best Formalist of the Age can fight with t'other.* Take the very flightest of them, the mere Steam of a *Coffee-House*, or *Offal* at a Great Man's Table, and it shall *Read and Write*, Bite and Slash, with any *Polemical Discourse* whatever; Ay, and *stare any Divine of 'em all in the Face*, in its own elegant Prose, without giving any of our Noble Poets the trouble of *clapping it pertly into four Verses!* If any Man of *Gravity* shall say, that there is more *Malice* than *Wit* in the *Letter*, *I must own* the *Writer* of it is treated with as *good Manners* as he has shewn to his Maker: And if it shou'd be added, that he is taken in his own Craftiness, there wants no proof; for never were there more and greater Blunders in so few Pages, in a Paper pretending to any thing. We shall give the Reader a taste of these, and some of its other Beauties; for to trace them all, would be too great a Task, especially to one who is already sufficiently weary of it.

DOES my young Orator want a set of dainty

ty Phrases? Let him purchase this *Letter*, and he shall have for his Shilling enow choice Expressions to pass him off for a Wit, even in a Lord's Company! *Volunteer in Faith; Saving Work; Soul-Rescuing Spirit; Saint Errantry; Devout Gallantrys; Believing with any Advantage of Recommendation to another World. Appetite of the Teeth*, very different no doubt from what we feel in the Stomach, and the *snappish Spirit got up in Religion*, like Hack in his Coach-box. *Inspiring Disease*, which in a moment burns up every Particle of Judgment and Reason: EVERY one of 'em! The Natural, as well as the *Heterogeneous*, which must be thrown off by *Fermentation*! Unhappy Reason! to be compos'd of such combustible Shreds, as that not one of them is capable of being sav'd from the burning Pannic of *Enthusiasm*. Surely it becomes the Government to make as severe Laws against such as burn up their Neighbour's Judgment, as against those who set his House on Fire. Which brings a Story into my Head which I have a great Mind to tell my Reader, since Method and Connexion in Writing are out of Fashion with all who Pretend to, or Enquire after, Wit.

WERE it needful, Time and Place might be nam'd, but you may reckon upon't for as great a Truth as the Story of that *Learned Prelate, who can give a full account of his Belief in Fairys*; that a certain Gentleman Neighbour to that Prelate, and not less a Wit than

the *Letter-writer* himself, or my Lord *** and the choicest of his Friends, being deeply engag'd in somewhat extremely Material, whether at Play, or with a Bottle, in a Love, or a State-Intrigue, I will not stay to enquire, since Authors differ about it: Now in the very height of his Diversion and *Good-humor*, comes there a *Grave* and *Serious* Man, one who had not the Air of a Fable-Maker, but seem'd to be in earnest and to believe what he reported, and with a vehemency becoming the importance of the News he brought: "Sir, says he to my Gentleman, "the House next yours being in "a Flame, the Evidences for your Estate, and "the Pardon on which your Life depends, are "in the extremest danger, to say nothing of "lesser Damages; and I am sent by the best "Friends you have, to warn you of this Misfortune; for sure one does not need persuade you to take what care you can to prevent it. Our Spark, who seldom look'd beyond the present, any farther than to the next Hour's Diversion, unless in a Politic Cabal; neither liking the News, nor the Interruption it gave him; and not a little offended to hear so wise a Speech from one whom he took to be so mean and contemptible a Person; and being willing to *preserve Wit in the World*, whatever became of his House, &c. after the usual Prelude of Oaths and Bluster, which wou'd be no manner of Ornament to our Story, "Fellow, says our Man of Wit, dost thou "think to impose on me, *who am us'd to ex-*

“*amine Things by a better Standard than the*
 “*common Taste ? I find no Commotion in my* P. 67.
 “*self, no Pannic that bewitches me; and tho’*
 “*not only thy Aspect, but thy very Breath and* P. 69.
 “*Exhalations are Infectious, I will not be im-*
 “*pos’d on by thy Testimony, nor led credulously* P. 67.
 “*into the Belief of so false a Story, which it is*
 “*not my Interest nor Pleasure to believe. For*
 “*having obtain’d the Knowledge of our Passions*
 “*in their very Seeds, measur’d well the Growth*
 “*and Progress of Entbusiasm, and judging rightly*
 “*of its natural Force, and what command it has*
 “*over our very Senses; I am fully instructed how*
 “*to oppose successfully those Delusions which*
 “*come arm’d with the specious Pretext of Moral*
 “*Certainty, and MATTER OF FACT. Our*
 honest Messenger, whose Understanding was
 contented with *plain Sense*, without pretending
 to *ascend into the higher Regions of Wit*, and
Sublime of Reason, tho’ he understood very lit-
 tle of this Harangue, yet was willing to sup-
 pose there might be somewhat in it, because it
 was utter’d by a Gentleman and a Wit; and
 being most desirous to save the Gentleman’s Ef-
 fects from the devouring Flame, or to speak in
 the Modish Dialect, having something of the
House-rescuing Spirit upon him, cry’d out pret- P. 31.
 ty earnestly, “Your House and your Estate,
 “Sir! for GOD’s sake consider these, and de-
 “fer your fine Discourses to a more convenient
 “Season. But our Wit, unable to bear Cor-
 rection, especially from such a *Formalist*, reply’d
 a little *Snappishly*, “Thy Gravity is of the very P. 17.

P. 57. " *Effence of Imposture; however I won't be so*
 P. 21. " *ridiculous as to take offence at this odd Story;*
 " *I mean to treat the matter in Raillery, and*
 " *and not to punish seriously what deserves only*
 " *to be laugh'd at, and is best cur'd by that In-*
 " *nocent Remedy.*

P. 8, 9. How far our Gentleman's *Passion for Ridi-*
cule would have serv'd him, not only to *Act* it
well, but even to Work himself into it beyond
 his own reach, is more than I can tell: But here
 he was interrupted by one in the Company,
 P. 56. *safe, because if after all there shou'd be nothing*
in the matter, there would be no harm in being
thus deceiv'd; but if there be any thing, it would
be fatal to him not to have believ'd to the full.

P. 19, 20. " *Shall I then give up my Preliminary Right of*
 " *Judgment, crys the Gentleman, and believe*
 " *the falsest and most ridiculous thing in the*
 " *World, at least for ought I know! Excellent*

P. 53. " *Character of a Man of Wit. No, I am resolv'd*
 " *to try, that I may be sure. Now the main*

P. 18. " *Point is to know always true Gravity from the*
 " *false; and this can only be by carrying the Rule*
 " *constantly with us, and freely applying it not*
 " *only to the Things about us, but to our selves,*
 " *For if we lose the measure in our selves, we*
 " *shall soon lose it in every thing besides. Now*
 " *what Rule or Measure is there in the World,*
 " *but by considering the real Temper of Things,*
 " *to find which are truly Serious, and which Ri-*
 " *diculous? And how can this be done, but by*
 " *applying the Ridicule, to see whether it will*
 " *bear*

"bear or no? But if we fear to apply the Rule
 "in any thing, what Security can we have a-
 "gainst the Imposture of Formality in all things?
 "If we allow our selves to be credulous in one
 "Point; the same Credulity may Rule us as it
 "pleases in all other. Alas, Sir, says the Mes-
 senger with Tears in his Eyes, "Your House
 "will be lost e're the Rule can be apply'd, per-
 "haps it is already past Redemption. The
 Horses were then call'd for, but as ill luck
 wou'd have it, they had been all sent home, and
 his Honor must walk, or else mount upon the
 Cart-Horse that brought the Intelligence. He
 had no mind to gall his Feet, and as little
 to that Equipage; so the Matter was debated
 till the House was burnt. For nothing wou'd
 convince him but a sight of the Flame: Where-
 as, besides that the *poor Gentleman* was Pur-
 blind, the best Eyes and Perspective in the
 World cou'd not have help'd him to what he
 desir'd, because not only the distance, but a Hill
 that interpos'd made the View impossible.

Now can any Body say that this Gentle-
 man did not act like a *Wit*, and apply the *Rule*
of Ridicule to a Nicety? How did he know but
 the Messenger was an *Imposture*, or an *Enthu-*
*sia*st, one who had caught the Pannic, whose
Imagination was so inflam'd, as in a moment to P. 69.
have burnt up every Particle of Judgment and
Reason! Probably he might be sent by some
 Highway-Men, to draw the Gentleman into
 their Toils; or by a Jealous and Enrag'd Hus-
 band, or Party, with a design to Murder him.

And provided the News was true, yet possibly the Fire might not reach his House; or some careful Servant or Friend might secure his Writings. Or supposing all were burnt, the
 P. 61. Queen, who *exceeds the very best of us in*
 P. 57. *Goodness*, may shew so much of *that Temper*, which the Letter calls *Divine*, as to provide for so extraordinary a Wit, a Man who *refus'd to*
 P. 53, 54. *put the Lye upon his Understanding*, and chose to lose his All, rather than to *believe at a venture against Reason*, what might have been the *greatest Falshood in the World*, for any thing could be brought as a *Proof or Evidence to the contrary*. Or if the very worst shou'd happen, it wou'd be only the spending of a short Life in Poverty; or by the loss of it, be secur'd from Want!

To return to our Remarques on the Beautys of the *Letter*: Besides the *Eloquence* and *Sublime* that is to be observ'd in the admirable Account of THAT SPIRIT which we read of, p. 69. Ask me not what Spirit, I beseech you, but look till you find it: Besides the Rhetorick, and all that, there is such a *Form* of Argument, such a *Degree* of Sense, such a *Temper* of Philosophy, and such *Measures* of Reason, as no Man cou'd ever have attain'd, unless he had been mounted on *Pegasus* himself, or on a *Bart'lemy* Hobby-Horse, For you must know, that *Judgment*, which is an Act of the Mind, is as much made up of *Particles*, as *Reason*, or the very Mind it self is; according to the New and Accurate Philosophy of the *Letter*!

ter! And whatever you may think of *Nature*, and her having *no Malice*, unless my Lord ***'s P. 62. Correspondent be hugely mistaken, she has so order'd it, that the *combustible Matters lie prepar'd within*, within *Judgment and Reason!* like the Barrels of Gunpowder, &c. in *Vaux's Cellar*, ready to take fire at a Spark, but chiefly in a *Multitude seiz'd with THAT Spirit. THAT Spirit of Combustible Matters, of Judgment and Reason, of an Inflam'd Imagination, of the Pannic, of Enthusiasm, of a Rattle and a Wind-mill, or of what you please: For THAT is a Libertine, as Universal and Good-natur'd a Word as one can wish; and may equally refer to any, or all of them.* P. 69.

YOUR *Noblest Actor, and Noblest Part*, your P. 12. *Natural and Unnatural*, are *as good as ever was*, P. 26. and shall chime with the best *De and Re* of 'em all, that ever little *Bayes* was Master of. For *some Considerable Presence, or Company*, such as my Lord *** and his Friends, or when it can't be had, the very endeavour by *Strength of Fancy to supply this Want*, by an *Imagin'd Presence*, do so raise a Man's *Thoughts*, and inspire him with more than what he feels at ordinary Hours:

That every Word he writes his *Spirits soar*, Hind and Panther
And he grows more a *Wit*, and more, and more. Transv. p. 26.

Nor is it to be question'd, that notwithstanding the *sound Judgment, the clear Head*, and the being Letter, P. 68, 69.
wholly free of Melancholy; yet the Pannic is surely caught, the Evidences of the Senses lost, as in a Dream;

Dream; the Blaze arising so of a sudden, and
 P. 78, 79. *the Eyes glow with the Passion; the Lymphatici*
of the Latins, and Nympholepti of the Greeks,
 appear, as oft as our *Letter-writer* is admitted
 P. 13. *into the Inspiring Presence of some Great Man,*
by whose Prescription and Example the third
Hind and Bottle teaches him Politics, as the next does
 Pant. P. 2. *Religion!*

IT was doubtless in such *good Humor* as this
 that the *Letter* was writ, and its Author pre-
 vail'd upon to oblige the World with those ad-
 mirable Discoveries, which are altogether new,
 and his own. They are of two sorts; some
 are so exceeding plain and obvious, that it
 is a wonder how any Body cou'd over-look
 them; and others so exceeding obscure and out
 of the way, that he must needs be no little
 Wit who was able to come at them. Of the
 first sort is that *Grave Remarque*, p. 61. that
Reason, if we will trust to it, will prove to us,
that GOD is so Good, as to exceed the very best
of us in Goodness. A plain and evident Truth,
 I acknowledge, but who cou'd ever have ex-
 pected it from the Pen of a Libertine! That
 P. 25. *Society has force in ill, as well as in good Pas-*
sions, and that an Affection is so much stronger
for being Social and Communicative, is what most
Men's Experience might have taught them.
 And I hope, Gentlemen, for the future, you will
 take care what Company you keep, for this Wri-
 ter's sake, as well as for your own. It being an
 irrefragable Truth, that he who converseth
 with wise Men, shall be wise; but a Compa-
 nion

nion of Fools, especially such Fools as make a Mock at Sin, shall inevitably be destroy'd. Of the same Nature is this Observation, that *the Praise of Goodness from an unsound, hollow* P. 66. (he might have added a Sensual, Impure, Worldly) *Heart, must certainly make the greatest Dissonance in the World:* And that *we can have no tolerable Notion of Goodness without being tolerably Good.* A Truth so plain, that we may safely conclude that the true Reason why Wits and Libertines have no tolerable Notion of GOD, is because they are in no degree like Him; they will not in any Measure endeavour to imitate Him.

FOR the other sort of Discoveries, which are so very Obscure, and yet so exceeding Useful, that none but a Man of such wonderful Sagacity, and extraordinary *Good-Humor* as my Lord ***'s Correspondent is adorn'd with, cou'd ever have pry'd into such deep Mysteries, or wou'd have condescended to Reveal them! To say nothing of the *Antients deriving both their* P. 8. *Religion and Polity from the Muses Art,* because our Modest Writer tells us 'tis known: The *Muses*, those *Angelical Ladies*, whom a Man P. 10. may as reasonably *Believe in*, as in any *Fairy* whatever! Not to examine the SO MANY THOUSAND kinds of *Worship instituted, all of them compatible and sociable, till Christianity broke the Peace.* Not to insist upon our Writer's *Belief*, that the *great and learned Apo-* P. 46. *stle St. Paul, found less Advantage* (in making Converts) *from the easy Treatment of his Athe-*
nian

P. 47.

nian, and other Heathen *Antagonists*, than from the surly and curst Spirit of the *Jews*; tho' he converted Multitudes among the *Gentiles*, and few, if any among the *Jews*, if we will believe the Scripture; but not to insist on this, since my Lord ***'s Friend might learn better things from some choice *Anecdote* in his Lordship's Library. I shall only observe, that if the New Account the *Letter* gives of St. Paul's accommodating himself to the way of Wit, be true, then there is a very great difference between the Antient *Way of Wit* and *Good-Humor* and the Modern. The *Letter* tells us, that the Apostle generously committed his Cause to this Proof, before a Roman Court of Judicature in the Presence of their Great Men and Ladies. And what was the Consequence? for hereby will the difference between Old Wit and New appear. Why, Modern Ridicule very often provokes, and pretends to no more than to make us Merry: Whereas St. Paul's Discourse was so well accommodated to the Occasion, that it made his very Judge tremble, convinc'd the Great Men and Ladies of his Innocence, and almost persuaded Agrippa to be a Christian. It seems too that the Evangelists were mistaken, in their Relation of the Jewish Raillery to our Savior, when they call'd upon Him to Prophecy who it was that smote Him; and when the Chief Priests and Scribes mock'd Him upon the Cross, besides all the Pageantry and Contumely He had suffer'd from the Roman Soldiers: The Letter-Writer
has

has better, or at least other, Information; for says he, *the Jews were never pleas'd to try* P. 47. *their Wit, or their Malice this way against our Savior, or His Apostles.*

ST. Luke indeed thought that those People mock'd who said the Apostles *were full of New Wine*, on the Day of *Pentecost* when they were filled with the Holy Ghost: For the Evangelist did not, it's like, imagine there wou'd be such Times, as that some Men shou'd reckon it a less Reproach to be Drunk, than to be Inspir'd. It has formerly been thought, that our *Primitive Founders*, to use the *Letter Writer's* accurate Expression, were brought upon the Stage in *Bear-Skins* to be Expos'd and P. 45. Ridicul'd, as well as in *Pitch-Barrels* to be burnt; and that the Foppery of the Church of *Rome* has fully shewn, that no *Bart'lemy Fair Method*, is able to suppress or silence Christianity, but only proves the Necessity of a Reformation, and return to the Primitive Simplicity of the Gospel. But our Writer knows better things; these are all mere Vulgar Errors, if he is to be credited. His beloved *Julian*, as likewise *Libanius*, *Porphry*, *Lucian*, and Men of the like Kidney, were it seems no Wits! For if they were, then the *Truths of the Gospel* have past even the *Test of Ridicule*, and Triumph'd over it.

IT has been a great Mistake, if the *Letter* be in the Right, to imagine as we have hitherto done, that there was any such thing as the Ten Persecutions; No, the Heathen good

- P. 29. good Men! knew nothing of *Bloodshed, Wars, Persecutions and Devastations*, but liv'd like harmless Lambs, without any other *Force* than
- P. 28. that of *Wit and Raillery*! It is a *Supernatural Charity*, even the Christian Religion, which enjoyns us to follow Peace with all Men, to Love our Neighbours as our selves, to Love our very Enemys, to return Good for Evil, to suffer the greatest Injuries rather than do the least, and by no means to Revenge our selves, 'tis this Religion that *has taught us the way of plaguing one another most devoutly; and entail'd upon us a mutual Hatred to all Eternity*! What a luckily Thought, and a just one, is this, to ascribe all the Sin that is in the World, and by Consequence all the Misery, the Natural Effect of Sin, to Religion! None can deny it, provided our Writer will take in the Nature and Reason of things (for I won't offend him with the Word Conscience) to bear a share in the Mischiefe. It being an undoubted Truth, that had there been no Law, there cou'd have been no Transgression. And for the same Reason, the Laws of the Land are the Cause of all the Robberies and Thefts committed in it; since if there had been no such thing as Property, every Man wou'd have had a Right to every thing he cou'd lay his Hands on!
- P. 40.

That *Julian the Apostate was a great Restrainer of Persecution*, is another Discovery: That he did not always Persecute to Death, tho' he did it sometimes, is what Antient Story informs us; the Reason given for this Hypocritical Mildness

ness is, because he envied Christians the Glory of Martyrdom. But together with this Truth, Story has it seems, convey'd many and great Mistakes to us, which the accurate *Letter* has corrected! *Julian's Resumption of Church Lands and Public Schools* the *Letter* acknowledges, but will not allow this to be Persecution, or at most but a small one: Tho'

* *Marcellinus* the Heathen Historian is angry * L. 22.
with him for denying the Children of Christi- c. 10.

ans an Ingenuous Education. And as for the pecuniary Mult^o impos'd on those who re- See *Socra-*
fus'd to sacrifice, and his exacting Money from *tes's Eccles.*
the Christians; his excluding Men from Civil *Hist. B.III.*
and Military Offices, unless they wou'd con- Chap. 11,
form to the Court-Religion; Disfranchising Ci- 13, 19. also
tys merely on a Religious account; to say no- *Sozom.*
thing of his putting Christians in Prison for B. V. Ch.
singing of Psalms, his Torturing others, and 5, 15, 18.

putting some to Death, as at *Merus* in *Phry-*
gia; these, it seems are mere Forgerys, *Delu-* Letter,
sions which come arm'd with the specious Pre- P. 67, 68.
text of Matter of Fact; or if the Facts are true, they are at least no Persecutions in the Opini-
on of our *Letter-writer*. But no wonder that
some Men have a peculiar Affection for *Julian*,
since he was an *Enthusiast*, practis'd Magic and
Divination, by the Entrails of Birds and Beasts,
nay even of Humane Bodys, pretending to Re-
velations from *Jupiter*, and Visions of the Pub-
lic Genius; was a very great Wit, and Scoffer
both at GOD and Man. For besides what he
wrote against Christianity, which he had Hy-
pocritically

pocritically profess'd to serve his own turn, and when this was serv'd, became an open and malicious Apostate; besides his Spite to Christianity, he shew'd his *good Humor* sufficiently, by the Satyr he wrote upon all the *Cæsars* his Predecessors, not sparing even the excellent *Marcus Aurelius*.

Letter
P. 29.

THAT *the saving of Souls is now the Heroic Passion of exalted Spirits, and is become in a manner the chief Care of the Magistrate, and the very End of Government it self*, is News that I am glad to hear. The Supreme Magistrate, I verily believe, and so must all the World, has nothing more at heart than the *Saving* her People all manner of ways, and being a Woman, is truly and in good earnest Religious. But whether or no the Magistrates who Govern under her, take care to imitate her bright Example is a Question. If they do, it will become every Man to be Religious out of Fear or Interest, or at least to keep his Profaness to himself: But that Division is better than Union, that *Harmony* arises from *Contrarieties*, as is intimated in p. 28, 29, that is, Music from Discords, ^{only} is what may be receiv'd upon the *Letter-Writer's* Credit, I dare not vouch my own for it. *Logic, Mathematics, Philosophy and Divinity*, are now Discover'd to be nothing else but Wit, sheer Wit, since it is for this very Reason, that *Magistracy* can never pretend to settle by Law a precise *Orthodoxy* in any one of them without spoiling it: For says the *Letter*, p. 30. 'Tis a hard matter for a Government to settle Wit.

THE

THE *Pannic* must by no means be forgotten, it makes so great a Figure in the *Letter*: To which we owe the noble Discovery, that *there are many Pannics in Mankind besides* P. 24. *merely that of Fear*; the only one that our dull Fore-Fathers took notice of. For no Body, I dare say, before this Ingenious Writer ever thought of *Pannic Love, Pannic Hope, Pannic Joy, Pannic Admiration, Pannic Boldness*, and so forth! And that *we may with good Reason call EVERY Passion Pannic which is rais'd in a Multitude, and convey'd by Aspect, or as it were by Contact, or Sympathy*, the *Letter* takes pains to prove. Even *Popular Fury* may be call'd *Pannic* (p. 24.) and your Hisses, your Hems and Huzzas are as truly *Pannic* as any of the Passions so lately dignify'd with that Title!

I very much question, says our Writer, P. 35, 36. *whether any thing besides Ill-Humor, can be the Cause of Atheism. And Good-Humor, as he tells us a little before, is the best Foundation of Piety and True Religion. Now since Ill-Humor is with him a Grave, Serious, Formal thing, and Good-Humor consists in Rail- lery, and making Ridicule the measure of every thing, by Consequence your Grave, Serious Men are Atheists, and your Witty Drolls and Buffoons the only Men of Religion; a Notable Discovery! But that Ill-Humor gives us Ill Thoughts of a Supreme Manager, is what (I believe) many People have observ'd. A Man in Good-Humor is like a Man in Place,*
L he

he treats his GOD, as this does his Prince with profound Deference, so long as the happy Season lasts, and every thing goes as he wishes: But turn the Tables, and he who was once most Good and Gracious is all of a sudden the Reverse. No Invektive against the Prince's Ministry is spar'd, nor even against Providence it self. So true, when apply'd to the Generality of Mankind, is that which Satan very falsely said of *Job*, *Put forth thy Hand, and touch him, and he will curse thee to thy Face.*

AND having mention'd *Job*, I beg leave to do him Justice, that his Memory may not suffer by Misrepresentations, as his Righteous Soul did formerly by the Inhumane Usage of his Injurious and Unmerciful Friends. The *Letter* will have it to be undeniable that *Job makes bold enough with GOD, and takes his Providence roundly to task*: Which might pass upon us if we were *Romanists*; or liv'd in *Japan*, upon condition of parting with our Bibles. But in a *free Nation, such as ours, where Imposture has no Privilege*; a Writer who regards his Reputation, or has any to lose, must not on Strength of Memory, or Conjecture, or (what is of late thought Demonstrative) by Strength of Desire affirm, that which every body can disprove. For tho' some bitter Complaints fell from *Job*, which his Merciful Judge indulg'd to the Infirmary of humane Nature, and his surprising and most grievous Afflictions; tho' the vexatious

vexatious Calumnies, and false Applications of known Truths, with which his hard-hearted Visitants continually teiz'd him, extorted some impatient and less consider'd Expressions from him in the Bitterness of his Soul; yet is he far, very far from any such profane *Freedom* towards his Maker, as our Modern Wits allow themselves. On the contrary he vindicates Providence on the Consideration of a Future State; Answers all the Objections against it, which are commonly drawn from such false Arguings, as the Shortness of Mens Views and their sensual Inclinations expose them to.

WE have indeed a *Notable Instance* of true Fortitude and Magnanimity in *Job*; and in his Friends of that poor spirited Insolence and Inhumanity, with which the Prosperous do commonly console the Afflicted. *His Friends scorn'd him*, as he complains, not for any Demerit, or *Injustice in his hands*, but merely because he was in Misery. They *made themselves strange unto him; they heap'd up Words against, and shook their Heads at him; they gap'd upon him with their Mouths, and smote him upon the Cheek reproachfully*; that is, in Modern Phrase, they *Ridicul'd* him. And pretending to pay him a Visit of Condolance, yet *were they not asham'd to magnify themselves against him; to overwhelm him who was already loaded with Misery, and to dig a Pit for their Friend*; to tempt him to Impatience, Resentment and Uncharity,

by their Barbarous Inhumanity. They dealt deceitfully with him as a Brook, to which he elegantly compares them, running over with Love and Service when he had no occasion for't, and failing him in the time of need. Yet was not this truly Heroic Sovereign of himself and his Dunghil brought so low as to sneak to them, he does not ask them to give him of their Substance; nor with humble Resignation submit to the Superior Wisdom of Men, whose Art consists in raising Expectations and Disappointing them. But he makes bold to equal himself even to these Great Men in the height of their Prosperity, when he was but a poor forlorn Wretch, stript of every thing, even of the Comfort of a Faithful Compassionate Friend. And roundly tells these grave Masters of Sentences, so ready to prescribe to others, and so forgetful of their own Duty, that they were *Forgers of Lyes*, and *Physicians of no Value*. The only Request he condescends to make them, is that they wou'd *leave him to himself, and let come on him what wou'd*. He asks no more than to be deliver'd from the Impertinency and Importunity of Merciless Mankind, that he might pour out his Complaint to that Benign Being, whose Mercy is Infinite, as his Majesty.

PHYSICIANS and their Patients are extremely oblig'd to our *Letter-Writer*, for his accurate account of the Natural Rise of Vapors, *p. 25*. And for his kind Intimation that
Diseases

Diseases may be seen, and that *Looks are infectious*, p. 24. And lest the Doctors in that Faculty, shou'd be so ill-natur'd as not to provide a Preservative against so dangerous a Disease as that which is *caught* as soon as seen, our Charitable Writer has kindly deliver'd the *only Remedy* against *Splenetic Hu-* P. 31.
mors : But yet so like a right Adept, and in such Noble and Mysterious Terms, that there is no fear that a vulgar Reader will ever find out the Process. Hear it then ; FOR *against Serious Extravagancies and Splenetic Humors, there is no Remedy but THIS*, says my Author ; THIS will certainly do ! If you ask what THIS is ? Enquire, I pray you, of the Context, and it will tell you, that this *Wit*, this *Liberty*, this *Raillery*, one of them will infallibly do the Business, but which of them, till you have sought, and labour'd, and made a hundred Experiments, you are not like to know.

THIS Period is indeed extremely worth one's Notice. Our Public Spirited Writer, in his great Zeal to *save Men's Sense and to preserve Wit at all in the World*, for Universal Good, assures us, that the *only way is to give Liberty to Wit* ; and that *Wit can never have its Liberty, where the Freedom of Raillery is taken away*, in ANY Case, as he declares elsewhere, when he asks *what Security we can have against the Imposture of Formality in ALL THINGS*, if we fear to ap-

- ply the Rule, (the Ridicule,) in ANY THING? p. 19. Now suppose a Reader as zealous for the *Liberty of Wit*, as my Lord ***'s Friend; or his Lordship himself can be, and careful not to be led credulously into any sort of Belief, nor impos'd upon by the Testimony of others; one who is a free Thinker, and neither Priest-ridden nor Lord-ridden; finding no Commotion in himself, no Pannic that bewitches him, is afraid of a sort of Enthusiasm of second hand, as he very well may, my Lord's Correspondent having after all, in some measure justify'd Enthusiasm, and own'd the Word, (whether for Welsh or Arabic, for a Rattle, or a Hobby-Horse, it matters not) nay even pleaded an Impulse, as the best Apology he cou'd make for his Letter: Suppose such a Reader shou'd ask a Reason why that unlimited Freedom of Raillery is so essential to the *Liberty*, and even to the very Being of *Wit*? Why, if he will have a Reason he shall have a Reason; not a common one, but New Wit, such as will Elevate and Surprise, without Thinking and Sense; the very same that little Bayes, and others in Imitation of him, are us'd to write for some Persons of Quality, and peculiar Friends of theirs, that understand what Flame and Power in Writing is. He shall have a Specimen of that Sublime of Reason, that Power of Eloquence, which you know who, discovers in Public upon occasion; who with other Great Men are sure to do, such Authors
- P. 67.
- P. ult.
- Rehearsal.
- P. 12.

thors *the Right to approve of what they do!*
 Enter therefore Reason, with your Usher
 FOR, and say why *Wit can never have its* P. 31.
Liberty where the Freedom of Raillery is taken away! See here she comes; FOR *against Serious Extravagancies and Splenetic Humors there is no Remedy but this!* Admirably Reason'd! Tenderton Steeple is the Cause of Goodwin Sands. What a Multitude of incomparable Arguments might be made after this Model! For Example, There is no such thing as Religion, or none worth minding; FOR, *a Letter* has been writ concerning *Enthusiasm!* Laws and Government are mere Fables, or a very Nuisance; FOR there have been Men who have despis'd their Authority and Power! Who wou'd not have fancy'd when that mighty FOR appear'd, that the *Letter* was about to prove, that Wit is such a Beast of Prey, as can't possibly subsist unless it may seize upon every thing? But whether or no it be his Meaning, that every Man must be allow'd to do what is Right in his own Eyes, in order to preserve that *Liberty* in *Wit* he pleads for, his Lord and himself may know; I humbly confess, this Excellent Reasoning is a Flight above my Apprehension. However, tho' this Ingenious Writer, does not creep servilely after Sense, nor offer you a *Formal Reason*; yet to shew his *Good Humor* he has done what's full as well, given you a *Recipe for the Vapors!*

BUT whatever his Recipe may prove, his way of Writing is without doubt incomparable. *We have indeed*, says he, *full Power over ALL OTHER Modifications of Spleen*, p. 31. Common Authors, who gravely follow Sense and Reason, do usually refer their little Words, their **THIS's**, **OTHER's**, **IT's**, and the like, to somewhat going before; The *Letter* is above such *Formality*, and scorns a Reader who has not Wit to do such little things himself, without an Author's Assistance. Therefore if you ask the Context what those **OTHER Modifications** are, over which we have no Power, at least not full Power; why it will answer, *Serious Extravagancies and Splenetic Humors!* If this seems a little odd to you, look higher for the **OTHER** excepted Modifications; and you will find, *Raillery, Liberty and Wit* in your way; and these, or nothing, must be the *Enthusiasms, and Modifications of Spleen* over which we have not full Power!

As to Power, we have been ignorant of the full extent of the Magistrate's till the *Letter* appear'd. For no Body, I dare say, ever imagin'd that his *Sword or Fasces* had any thing to do, either by way of *curing or increasing, Convulsions in Nature, Storms, Earthquakes, or other amazing Prodigys!* A gross piece of Ignorance! the *Letter* informs us better. For having assign'd these, and other *Melancholy Occasions*, as the Cause of the *Pannic and Vapors*, p. 25. in the next Page he tells us, that for the

Magistrate

Magistrate to apply a *Serious Remedy*, wou'd be only to *encrease the VERY CAUSE* of the Pannic and Vaporous *Distemper* ! to bring down more *Storms*, and *Prodigys*, to raise *Earthquakes* and *Convulsions* among us!

To *have a Notion*, is a vulgar Expression; he who wou'd speak *Sublimely*, must talk of P. 6a. having *settled with himself a Notion*. For *Notions*, like *Widows*, are valu'd only according to their *Settlement*, they are nothing in themselves, mere *Idols* of our *Brains*, and mean no more than we think fit to have them. Hence it is that the *Letter*, p. 40. wants a little *Explanation*. It tells us, that unless a *Sacred Author* in our *Religion*, had *assur'd us that the Spirit of Love and Humanity is above that of Martyrs*, one might be a little *scandaliz'd perhaps at the History of many of our Primitive Confessors and Martyrs*. I wou'd be glad to have his *Opinion* whether they acted according to that *Spirit of Love* or not? If they did, where is the *Scandal*? If they did not, there is *Scandal*, I confess; but the *Authority* of a *Sacred Author* is so far from excusing it, that it is occasion'd, or at least heighten'd by this very *Authority*, in that the *Practice* appears so different from the *Rule*.

AN honest *Heathen* might have been scandaliz'd at *Christianity* it self, had it taught any thing *Immoral* or *Inhumane*; but not so much at its *Disciples* for *Practising* what their *Religion* taught. On the other hand, by how much

much the more Excellent its Precepts are, he wou'd be so much the more Scandaliz'd at the Contradictory Lives of its Professors. But GOD be thanked, our Primitive Confessors and Martyrs set no such ill Example. *Let none of you suffer as an Evil-Doer, or as a Busy-Body in other Men's Matters, (a Factious Party-man) but if any Man suffer as a Christian, let him not be asham'd.* This was the Rule; and never was there any so faithfully transcrib'd by such a Multitude of Men and Women. If a few ignorant Zealots happen'd now and then, and it was but seldom, to forget the Precepts of their Religion; they were always disown'd and censur'd by their Governors and Fellow-Christians.

P. 5, 6. Now for a little Manners; If we follow the Example the *Letter* gives us, 'tis the best Manners in the World to entertain our Bet-
 P. 14. ters *with a sort of Idle Thoughts*, our Sleeping or Waking Dreams! To let them know what *they may*, and what they may not *do*; and what they *must certainly have observ'd*; to tell the World, we may *justifiably treat them, with the Intimacy and Freedom* of abusing all that's Sacred, and make them the Confidants of our Sins and Follies! This is a new way of Address and Breeding, it must be own'd, and such as Men of Quality wou'd not have endur'd in former Ages.

BUT what if our Writer's Artillery does Religion no manner of hurt, and is only le-
 vell'd

AN ENQUIRY AFTER WIT.

171

well'd against *Enthusiasm*, as the Title imports? I wish it may prove so, for the *poor Gentleman's* sake; for if it be otherwise, the Wit of his *Letter* will be no equivalent for the Profaneness: Let us see then his account of *Enthusiasm*. By p. 27. one wou'd take it to be nothing else but *Persecution*, from whatever hand it comes, whether the Magistrate persecutes the People, or they the Magistrate: For, says the Letter, *to deny the Magistrate a Worship, or take away a National Church, is as mere Enthusiasm as the Notion which sets up Persecution*. Whence it follows, that whatever Privilege the good People may claim, *Magistrates* must not pretend to be out of the bearing of a Deity. Their P. 58. Understandings ought to be superior to those odd and contrary Storys, which (as it seems) puzzle little Wits. They shou'd Know that there is a GOD; for if they Disbelieve or Doubt, it will be the most *Ridiculous Formality in the World* to Worship one. Magistrates, in a word, must neither be Atheists nor Deists, for these good People have no manner of occasion for a *Worship*, or a *National Church*, 'twou'd be highly Ridiculous in them to pretend to any: Whereas, according to the *Letter*, a Church and a Worship are so absolutely necessary to the Magistrate, that he can't be without them, if he means to guard against *Enthusiasm*.

AGAIN,

P. 82.

AGAIN, there is a *Noble Enthusiasm*, which is the Spirit the Philosopher allots to *Heroes, Statesmen, Poets, Orators, Musicians, and even Philosophers themselves*; nor can we forbear ascribing to it whatever is greatly perform'd in any of these ways. Who wou'd not be found among such good Company! Nay *Enthusiasm* is so wonderfully *Powerful and Extensive*, as it may very well be, if it is a *Natural Passion*, that even *Atheism* it self is not exempt from it. For, as some have well remark'd, there have been *Enthusiastical Atheists*, (p. 80, 81.) and my great Lord *** himself has his *Enthusiastic Friend*, (p. ult.) And yet as *Natural* as *Enthusiasm* is in one Page, we are told in another, that it is a *Distemper*! As near a-kin as it is to *Superstition*, and as much as it exposes us to it, (p. 67.) a *Philosopher*, no meaner Man than

P. 27.

Lucretius, may bend the whole Force of his *Philosophy* against *Superstition*, and yet leave room for visionary *Fancy*, and indirectly tolerate *Enthusiasm*! With Reverence to *Heroes* and *Statesmen*, &c. be it spoken, *Madmen* is but another word for *Enthusiasts*, see p. 70. *Fanatics*, and *Drunkards* too come under this Character; and therefore no wonder that all Nations have had their *Lymphatics* of some kind or other, (p. 77.) There is a *Melancholy* which accompanys ALL *Enthusiasm*, (p. 21.) and a *Devout Melancholy* or

P. 74.

Enthusiasm, which requires more *Deliberation*
and

and Thoughtful Practice, to fix it self in a Temper, and grow Habitual, than People who are all Air and Humor can afford: And yet so necessary is this Devout Melancholy, or, if you please, this Serious Temper, that one can't be deliver'd from this Habit, but at the sad Cost of Inconsiderateness, or Madness. (p. 34.)

To finish our account of *Enthusiasm*, it is as different from true Religion, as Falshood is from Truth, Darkness from Light. For, says the Letter, p. 81. *Inspiration is a REAL Feeling of the Divine Presence, and Enthusiasm a FALSE one.* There is then such a thing as Divine Inspiration, quite contrary to Fanatical Visions, otherwise our Writer's Distinction is groundless. Nor cou'd he, with any tolerable Sense, have distinguish'd between *Enthusiasm*, and *Piety and true Religion*, as he does, not only when he tells us, that *the Antients tolerated Euthusiasts of all kinds*, p. 28; Whereas every Body knows that Christianity was cruelly Persecuted, and sometimes by Philosophical Emperors: But even more expressly p. 25. And again, p. 35. by assigning *good Humor* as the *best Foundation for Religion*, and the *best Security against Enthusiasm*; and after so plain a Distinction, to confound them wou'd be to contradict himself as well as Truth. The *Divine Presence* is *Real*, and *Felt* to be so, in *Inspiration* truly such; whereas that Presence

is

is but *Imagin'd*, or Pretended to in *Enthusiasm*. So that Divine Revelation is as different from Enthusiasm, as any thing whatever can be from the false and hypocritical Pretence to it. The *Letter* pretends indeed, that *Divine Inspiration cannot easily be distinguish'd, by its outward Marks, from Enthusiasm*; and that *the Passion they raise is much alike*. Now I care not if for once I allow him, that they are just as like as a Dream is to what we Do and Say when awake: And if he will be so *good Humor'd* as never to Eat and Drink but in a Dream, he will undoubtedly give the World the strongest Proof that may be, that Religion is nothing else but Enthusiasm.

WHETHER or no his Design is to insinuate this, I pretend not to judge; but this I think must be allow'd, that if he meant well, then either through *Inconsiderateness*, and the Vanity of being thought a Wit; or through the Distemper of an *Inflam'd Imagination*, which had quite destroy'd his *Judgment* and *Reason*, he forgot himself so far as to make odious Comparisons. And did not take care throughout his *Letter*, to distinguish duly between Religion and Enthusiasm, but has made several horrible Jumbles, which are not less Silly, than they are Profane. After the manner of other little Writers, who sometimes through want of Skill, and sometimes through Craft and Design,
leave

leave their Reader in such Confusion, that he is not able to find any Meaning in the Discourse it self, nor what tolerable Design it drives at. But if the *Letter-writer's* Real Respect for Religion, be no greater than his Performance in general speaks it, then can't it be deny'd, that *Truth, the most Powerful P. 7. Thing in the World,* has so far over-rul'd him, as to force him to confess that which quite overthrows the Fabric, and spoils the whole Design of his Epistle.

*And what a noble Plot is crost!
And what a brave Design is lost!*

For it is to be hop'd, that his *Ridicule, so ill P. 16. plac'd at first, has fallen at last where it deserves:* And that such Poor and Ungentleman-like, and even Unmanly ways of attacking Religion, as they shew the Malice and Insolence, so do they at the same time expose the Weakness and Folly of its Adversarys.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page	Line	Read
7	21	It is by
	22	Wisdom
P. 24. l. 24. for	14	Pen. Vulgar, & to
have, r. pay.	29	10 so rare p. 32. l. 23
f. for to	52	1 resol'd the, r. th
P. 15. l. 2. add	55	30 probable, that
Arians	87	25 render
P. 19. l. 14. 2. but.		29 none shall
	92	26 who
	94	18 Destruction
	125	1 dele last Comma
	127	21 Scoffs, who
P. 54 an'op. r. & Equity, 50		
P. 58. l. 12. r. & 50		
63. 15. aft y ^m make a: 102. 20. if		
114. 9. r. an easiness. 122. 15. make ?		
121. 8. 2 And		
137 23. make a, 2. 27 2.,		
160. 25 add only		
162. 17. r. Injurious		
142. 24 f. not affraid r. incapable &		
f. thing, r fear.		